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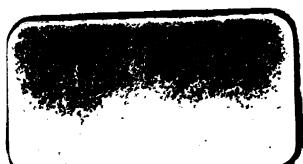
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THE
HEIRESS IN HER MINORITY;
OR, THE
PROGRESS OF CHARACTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'BERTHA'S JOURNAL'

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IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.  
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LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1850.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author has endeavoured, in the following pages, to trace the steps by which the power of self-control may be practically developed in a young and ardent mind when brought under the influence of high and noble motives ; and further, to show how materially the happiness of the individual may be enlarged by turning it from the selfish indolence of pride to the active and habitual exercise of the faculties in the acquisition of useful and varied knowledge.

The scene is laid in the West of Ireland, and a few slight sketches are given of its many interesting objects ; but they were all written before that country had become a prey to the late dreadful evils of rebellion and famine ; and the reader is assured that all the characters are purely imaginary.

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EVELYN;

OR THE

PROGRESS OF CHARACTER.

CHAPTER I.

Sir Connor O'Brien and his Granddaughter Evelyn—His displeasure with Evelyn's Father.

"My dear Evelyn, where have you been? You used to come to me earlier," said Sir Connor O'Brien as his granddaughter hastily entered the library at nine o'clock, flushed and over-heated, her countenance radiant with the pleasure of successful activity. Intent on the occupation which had engaged her, she scarcely looked in his face as she gave him her morning kiss; and then rapidly described a bower that she had been making of a variety of ornamental shrubs and plants;—"and particularly," said she, "your favourite blue clematis, grandpapa, which will twine over it—and we shall sit there in the hot summer days, and we"—A sigh from Sir Connor interrupted Evelyn, and then for the first time she perceived that he looked unusually grave. Her thoughts instantly turned to him, and, reproaching herself for her negligence, she threw her arms round his neck and entreated him to tell her if he was displeased with her. "No, my child, not displeased with you, but I feel very ill. You know, love," added he, observing her countenance change, "that I have frequently warned you of my precarious state, and of the uncertainty of my life. I have had a bad night, and feel symptoms which convince me that I cannot last long; I know I am declining rapidly."

"Oh, my dear grandpapa!" exclaimed Evelyn, bursting into tears.

"Do not be shocked, my child; you ought to have expected such changes. I sighed," continued he after a pause, "at thinking of your disappointment if I should be unable to enjoy the pretty bower you have been making for me."

"But may I not send directly for a physician?"

"I have already sent; I waited a little while for you to write for me, I felt so languid; but you were out, so I wrote myself; and am better, I think, for the exertion, my love," he added, observing her look of mortification; and smiling tenderly, said, "Come, let us go to breakfast; you have earned yours by your morning's hard labour for your poor grandpapa."

Sir Connor O'Brien had been an invalid for some years; but though Evelyn was accustomed to the sudden attacks of illness to which he was subject, she had never before observed so great an alteration in his appearance, nor such a sudden loss of strength, as had taken place since she bade him good night the preceding evening. She was almost overwhelmed by her alarm at his illness; but did not yield to her feelings, and busied herself trying to make him comfortable.

Drawing the breakfast-table to his arm-chair, to save him the trouble of moving from one seat to the other, she prepared his breakfast; but he had no appetite, and was glad when the table was removed. When Evelyn had tried in every way to settle her grandpapa comfortably, she could think of nothing but her anxiety to see the physician; and she sat for some time quite silent, wishing again and again for his arrival. At length recollecting herself, she asked Sir Connor if she should read to him as usual.

"Yes; I should like to hear you, my child, but fear I cannot attend; however, I will try. Go on from what we read yesterday—was it not a part of St. John?"

"Yes, grandpapa, the twelfth chapter of the Gospel of St. John."

"Well, continue from that, it is the best thing you could select for me. But stay, I wish to speak to you about—but I cannot yet. Yes; read first, I will listen if I can."

Dr. Z—— arrived soon after the chapter was finished ; he did not think there was any immediate danger. Her hopes revived, and, with all the ardour of affection and a precision beyond her years, she, with the aid of the faithful house-keeper, obeyed implicitly all the doctor's directions. Urging perfect quiet as essential, Dr. Z—— left her, promising to return in a few hours.

Sir Connor made some ineffectual attempts to speak ; he was anxious to impart something to Evelyn, but his mind was not clear ; and though Evelyn seldom presumed to argue with him, she now persuaded him to refrain for a time from speaking, and try to compose himself ; and, concealed from his view, sat watching by him while he slept at intervals, or lay restlessly expecting Dr. Z——'s return.

The means used by this skilful physician were so effectual, that by the next day the worst symptoms of his attack had abated.

Finding his intellects relieved from the confusion which had overpowered them, he told Evelyn that he wished to speak to her on matters which it was important she should know. "Feeling," he said, "that his life could not be much prolonged, he was anxious to relieve his mind from the pain of leaving undone anything that was for her advantage."

"No, no, no, grandpapa," she exclaimed, "you must not, shall not speak of business to me now !"

"Do not interrupt me ; you know not what a relief it will be to me."

After he had said these words there was a long pause, as it appeared to Evelyn, who, though dreading the effect that the exertion might have on him, felt curious to know what it could be that her grandpapa was so anxious to communicate. At last, having endeavoured to collect his thoughts, he said,

"My Evelyn, I wish you to write to Mr. Desmond—to your father : inform him that I am ill, and wish to see him immediately. I fear, Evelyn—I am beginning to fear—that I have separated you too much from—your—father. I have acted with a weakness perhaps reprehensible. Now, too late, I regret it. If—if—I am taken now, there will be no one to supply my place to you."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, throwing herself on his bed in an agony of tears, "no one can or ever will be like you, or love me as you do, grandpapa."

"Hush, my love; I wish to explain some circumstances to you; listen to me. You know that when your mother—my dear daughter—my only child—was taken from us, I entreated your father to give you to me; and you have been my treasure all the years of your life. But you do not know that, having given my daughter a tolerable fortune at her marriage, I reserved the disposition of my landed property in my own power; and that I have settled on you, without reference to your father, the whole of my estates. Now then, Evelyn, you are probably on the point of inheriting a large property, and of becoming what I think you had never expected—an heiress! Yes; I see your surprise; but let me finish."

Evelyn could not control her feelings; and for a few moments Sir Connor was silent, while tears and incoherent expressions broke from her.

"Command yourself, my Evelyn, and listen to the little I have to say. When your father consented to your living with me, and being my child, I thought indeed that he would have been much with you; but we have seen little of each other since. Being displeased—weakly I confess—at his second marriage, I for a long time refused to see him; and I resolved in my own mind that you should never reside with him. I therefore made my will, providing, in the strongest terms, that, if you became my heir before you were of age, you should reside on your estate—in your own castle, independent of his control, and amenable to your guardians only, who, as the trustees of your property, will regulate your expenses as they judge best."

Not attending to what Sir Connor said of her expenses, she thought only of her father at that moment, and, looking earnestly in Sir Connor's face, she said, kneeling by his side,

"But my father!—Oh! grandpapa, will not he feel very sorry not to have the care of his daughter? If I must lose my own dear grandpapa, no one I am sure will care for me so much as my father."

"Your father knows you so little—and—and—perhaps I

have been wrong—but,” added he with a trembling voice, “I had hoped to take you to Ireland myself, introduce you to my tenantry, and give you an opportunity of seeing more of your father and his family. When he comes I will explain all to him.”

“Pray, pray, grandpapa, give all to him! Why should I be richer than my father?”

“No, dear child, I cannot change my will now; I am not able. Yet—yet—I am sensible a dying man ought not to retain resentment—nor do I indeed—but I can do nothing to-day; to-morrow perhaps I may alter your guardians, but not to-day; I am tired.” He sank back on the pillow; after a considerable time he continued, “I disliked the choice he made, and could not reconcile myself to the thoughts of a stepmother to my Evelyn. You shall live in your own castle; but it will be—yes, it will be better, perhaps, that he should—but no matter, I am unable to say more now—except”—and he tried to raise himself a little as he spoke—“except only this, probably my last injunction to you—Evelyn O’Brien—as you will be, for on becoming heiress of my property you are bound to take *my* name. My last injunction is, to preserve the dignity and unsullied honour of that name and family, to reside chiefly on your estate, and to be kind to your tenantry, for your fond old grandfather’s sake!”

For some minutes Evelyn, holding his hand, wept upon it, unmindful of any idea but the painful one that her grandfather spoke of the time when she should lose him—that kind parent who had been from her infancy the object of her filial tenderness and gratitude; and the consequent agitation might have been injurious to Sir Connor had not Dr. Z—— arrived soon after the conversation; when, having insisted on Evelyn’s retiring till more composed, he administered a cordial to his patient and again prescribed perfect quiet.

As it was necessary to write to Mr. Desmond by that day’s post, Evelyn began a letter expressive of her great astonishment at finding herself appointed the heiress of her grandfather, and of her regret that her father was not to be his heir. She tore the letter, and began another—and another; but, successively destroying each when she had written a few

lines, she determined at last simply to inform her father of Sir Connor's illness and strong desire to see him, but to make no allusion to an arrangement which her grandfather might yet be persuaded to alter.

Evelyn had no intimate knowledge of her father, for, though he had come to England from time to time to see her, his visits had been always short, and the coldness of Sir Connor produced such a constraint in her father's manners, that she felt an awe of him that was inconsistent with the affection and intimate confidential intercourse which should exist between parent and child.

Evelyn's hopes of her grandfather's recovery gradually returned as he appeared to gain ground; her spirits rose as suddenly as they had been depressed, and, notwithstanding the warnings of the physician, she felt sure that her prayers would be granted, that her beloved grandfather would recover, and that her father would yet be restored to his favour.

Several times, when he appeared not to suffer much, she ventured to remind him that he had spoken of altering the arrangements in his will in regard to her guardians; but he still postponed making the exertion, and at last, disappointed at not seeing Mr. Desmond, he declared that he would make no change till his arrival.

Unfortunately Mr. Desmond had gone to the Continent shortly before Sir Connor's illness; and his letters, though forwarded, did not immediately reach him, as his stay was short at the places he visited; but, vexed at the delay, and with the querulousness which sometimes attends on suffering, Sir Connor could not be persuaded that Mr. Desmond had left home before Evelyn's letter could have been received, and, declaring that he would abide by his first resolve and leave his little Evelyn free from all interference on the part of either her father or stepmother, he forbade her mentioning the subject again. She was obliged to submit; she had never disputed his wishes when thus decidedly expressed, nor indeed ever had reason to do so, for his constant wish was to indulge her; it was therefore difficult to remonstrate now, and the more so as she did not fully comprehend his plans with regard to herself.

CHAPTER II.

Sir Connor's Death — Mr. Desmond's Arrival.

SIR CONNOR O'BRIEN appeared to be steadily recovering ; and Evelyn, who was in daily expectation of her father, flattered herself that there would yet be time for an explanation which would reinstate him in her grandfather's esteem, and produce such a change in Sir Connor's intentions as she had vainly endeavoured to urge. Sometimes her sanguine mind ventured to look forward to his complete recovery ; but Dr. Z—— still assured her it was impossible, and endeavoured to warn her that the silver cord might suddenly break—even when she least expected.

The sad moment came but too soon. Some weeks had passed since Sir Connor's alarming illness, when, one fine afternoon, having, with Evelyn's assistance, taken a short walk in the open air, he complained of fatigue, and retired immediately to bed.

Evelyn placed the pillows as he directed, and then knelt beside the bed, holding his hand.

"Thank you, my child," said he, looking at her ; "you always settle me so nicely : you are always kind, always, my dear Evelyn. May God bless you, my poor, dear child, now and for ever !"

As he said these words he pressed her hand, which he had held, and, laying his head gently on the pillow, seemed to sleep. Soon afterwards he sighed, his hand relaxed its hold, and the eyes which, but a few moments before, had looked so tenderly on Evelyn, were closed for ever. She was not for some time aware that he was no more : looking at him at intervals, she thought for some time that he was in a tranquil sleep ; and though Jane, her maid and assistant in attending on Sir Connor, endeavoured to convince her of the sad truth,

she still imagined that he breathed, and it was long before she relinquished all hope. Kissing his cold lips, she remained by his bedside, watching for some movement; weeping at intervals as she thought over all his kindness to her: but when at last she could no longer resist the conviction that he was gone, her grief was violent; and Jane, retiring that Evelyn might indulge her feelings without restraint, for some time desisted from any attempt to induce her to leave the room.

Jane was a most faithful creature; truly Irish in the warmth of her feelings, and in her attachment to Evelyn. Formerly her nurse, now her maid and an excellent servant, her judicious conduct on all occasions had given her great influence over Evelyn, as well as with her grandfather.

At length Jane returned to the room: she knelt down beside the bed on which Sir Connor lay; and first trying to soothe Evelyn, who was nearly exhausted by her violent emotions, put up a short prayer, in which Evelyn joined; and, after some pause, endeavoured to persuade her to retire to rest, using the tenderest epithets to induce her to yield to her urgency.

"Dear Miss Evelyn! my heart's blood!* I beseech you do not stay here: leave the chamber of sadness, and let me perform the necessary duties now. Retire, dear, and compose yourself, for, alas! you can do no more for him that you were always doing for—my honoured master—may the Lord give peace to his soul!"

"Oh! Jane, Jane!—My grandfather!—What shall I do without my dear grandpapa? Now I have lost him, I have no one now—no dear grandpapa to take care of."

"You were always ready and active, night and day, to comfort him and attend him; but now nothing more can be done, darling Miss Evelyn. We are, indeed, left alone and helpless to mourn for him that was so kind to us."

"Not helpless, I hope, Jane," said Evelyn, trying to exert herself. "God will surely support us; and—my father will come soon, I hope."

Here a fresh burst of tears at the recollection of the kind parent she had lost, and the little knowledge that she had of

* A well-known Irish expression of affection.

her father, interrupted her, and for some minutes she seemed to undergo afresh all the agony of the past hours.

At last Jane prevailed on her to retire to rest, and after some time, fatigued by agitation and weeping, Evelyn sank into a heavy sleep, to the great satisfaction of her affectionate maid, who sometimes stole into her room lest her poor young lady should feel lonely if awake.

The next morning Evelyn awoke unrefreshed—oppressed by that painful but indistinct sense of misfortune of which we are conscious even in our sleep. For a long time her mind was filled with the recollection of the various little customary duties and attentions to her grandpapa which used to occupy her, of the cessation of which she was every moment painfully reminded. The sense of her present loneliness seemed to increase while she thought of his indulgence and tenderness; yet, though she had been in daily anxious expectation of Mr. Desmond, she began to dread his arrival. So little did she know him, that she felt an undefined yet distressing fear of his supposed displeasure at the arrangements Sir Connor had made, which, as far as she understood them, appeared to be unjust towards her father. Evelyn knew not what to do, or what to wish: pressing her hand to her aching forehead, she sat lost in thought; but after some time, recollecting herself, she sought relief and help in prayer, and afterwards tried to consider what duties she had now to fulfil.

Recollecting that she ought to inform her grandfather's friends of her loss, she employed herself in writing to them; and though the occupation was melancholy, she found herself less unhappy while thus engaged.

In the afternoon her solitude was interrupted by a visit from Mr. Stanley, in whose parish they resided. He and Mrs. Stanley had been from home, they had only now returned, and on hearing of her affliction he hastened to offer her consolation as a clergyman and assistance as a friend.

He spoke with seriousness and tenderness of the loss she had sustained, of the duty of submission and self-control, and, endeavouring to strengthen her mind, by the comfort which religion alone can supply, suggested what would be most useful to read.

He tried to encourage her to look forward to the happiness of a closer intimacy with her father and his family. Little knowing the awe she felt of that parent, he was surprised at the involuntary shudder which the mention of his name seemed to produce.

Mr. Stanley invited Evelyn to the parsonage, but she preferred remaining at home, as she was in constant expectation of Mr. Desmond; and he did not press farther, thinking it injudicious to withdraw the young mind too soon from the house of mourning, or, by endeavouring to subdue the feelings it excites, to efface the impressions which are salutary to the quick sensibility of youth.

Evelyn, revived by his sympathy, tried to read as he had advised her—though she found it difficult to attend, or to think steadily of anything but the loss of him who had been the director of all her actions. The wish to look more than once at her grandpapa often interrupted her, endeavours to read: at other times her thoughts were fixed on her father—and in her loneliness she began to wish for his arrival even while she feared it.

Mrs. Stanley had submitted to her husband's opinion, though she did not agree in his objection to pressing Evelyn's removal to the parsonage: she felt much for the young creature alone in her affliction, and, finding in the afternoon that Mr. Desmond had not yet arrived, she went to sit with her—knowing how much the presence of a sympathising friend assists in relieving those who, unaccustomed to misfortune, feel it accompanied by that dreadful tedium which makes its weight the more difficult to bear. Her compassion was the more particularly excited because Evelyn had yet no other object of affection—no new duties to supply the place of those to which her life had hitherto been devoted—nothing to draw her thoughts away from her present sorrow; and on leaving her late in the evening Mrs. Stanley had the satisfaction of feeling that her society had been of use.

The next day Mr. Desmond arrived. Evelyn saw him coming into the little garden in front of the house. She would have hastened to meet him; but, trembling and hesitating, she had scarcely advanced a step when she felt herself

pressed to her father's heart. He spoke to her with tenderness and kindness; detailed to her the various circumstances which had prevented his receiving her letters; lamented that he could not have come sooner to support and console her in her grief; and entered so much into all her feelings that, convinced of his affection, she forgot her apprehensions.

"I was in hopes," said he, "that some kind friend would have taken you away."

"Mr. Stanley did invite me; but I felt that it would be unnatural to leave poor grandpapa—and, besides, I expected you every moment. The Stanleys have done all that was kind. Mr. Stanley knew that he was an executor; and was so good as to write to Mr. Driver, who has always been grandpapa's man-of-business, and is, Mr. Stanley thinks, the other executor. I was in hopes," added she, timidly, "that it would have been you, papa."

"I did not think it probable," replied he.

They were silent for some moments. Evelyn thought it a good opportunity to inform her father of Sir Connor's great desire to see him, and that he had intended to make some alteration in his will if Mr. Desmond had arrived in time. She was going to enter into particulars—but hesitated—knew not how to begin—and was still silent; when the entrance of Mr. Stanley, who had heard of Mr. Desmond's arrival, relieved her from further difficulty, and gave her an opportunity of retiring to calm her agitated mind.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Stanley and Mr. Driver examine the Will — Evelyn Heiress of Sir Connor — Preparations for removing to Ireland — Evelyn's Pride.

SHORTLY after Mr. Stanley's entrance Mr. Driver also arrived. They proceeded to business immediately, for it was necessary to learn Sir Connor's directions for his funeral.

The will was opened, and read by Mr. Driver in an audible voice; and, though painful to Evelyn, her father insisted on her being present. The affectionate expressions with which she was named touched her deeply; but it was a relief to her mind to perceive that most of the peculiar circumstances which she had imagined had been left for her to explain to Mr. Desmond were mentioned in the will, and that he had been quite aware of Sir Connor's intention to make her heiress of his property. He had not expected even the small legacy which Sir Connor bequeathed to him; but he had never anticipated that the guardianship of his own daughter would be vested in strangers; and it was indeed a surprise to him to find that it was not intrusted to him—that he was to have no control over her—that there was even a direct prohibition to her residing with him reiterated at the conclusion of the will—and that in all cases of doubt, relative to herself or her property, reference must be made to Mr. Stanley and Mr. Driver. It was ordered in the will that Evelyn should reside at Cromdarragh Castle, where a respectable lady should be her companion till she was of age; for which office Sir Connor named Mrs. Manvers, his own niece, if she could be induced to undertake the trust; and in case of her refusal, the appointment of some other person was left to the decision of the guardians.

Evelyn perceived how much her father was hurt; and though unwilling to acknowledge that her grandpapa could

be wrong, she tried to soften the pain he felt by repeating the regret which Sir Connor expressed at having separated her so much from him—assuring him that, had he fortunately arrived at the time he was expected, alterations would have been made quite to his satisfaction.

After the reading of the will, directions were given by the executors for the funeral; and the day after the last obsequies had been performed an examination was made of all the personal property of the late Sir Connor; in which Mr. Stanley, who entered into Mr. Desmond's feelings, requested him to join—for he wished to have the advantage of his judgment in everything relative to Evelyn, and was on all occasions ready to defer to it; while the other executor, Mr. Driver, a mere man of business, seemed to pay little attention to the feelings or peculiar circumstances of either Mr. Desmond or his daughter. Intent only on the necessity that all things should be done according to law, he made all the requisite searches and perquisitions, and put every question he could think of, necessary or unnecessary, to Evelyn, who was obliged to point out to him, as far as she knew, each place where money or valuable papers had been deposited.

Though Mr. Stanley, considerate of his feelings, had politely requested Mr. Desmond's presence in this disagreeable search, yet Mr. Driver, who from being more accustomed to business took the lead in everything, evidently disliked it, having formed a very unfavourable opinion of her father on finding that by Sir Connor's will he was not permitted to be guardian of his daughter or of her property. Resolving, however, to be her father as far as was possible, Mr. Desmond overlooked Mr. Driver's manner, and, accepting Mr. Stanley's attentions, determined to accompany and support his daughter to the utmost.

Evelyn withdrew as soon as she could from the investigation; and when concluded, and a perfect inventory of all was made, Mr. Driver came into the room where she was sitting with her father, and, walking pompously up to her, said, with a low bow and smile,

Miss Evelyn O'Brien, I give you joy! You are heiress of the fine estate of Cromdarragh and of the manor of Mount

Clydagh, and also of all the personal property of the late Sir Connor O'Brien—such as plate, jewels, houses, carriages, books, money in the stocks, &c. He has left you an unencumbered property—a rare thing now; particularly in *your* country, Miss O'Brien, let me tell you! In that country there are few estates free from debt; and I must say, Miss O'Brien, some credit is due to the old gentleman for having been so singular as to preserve his property from encumbrance.

Evelyn, though disgusted by his manner, had tried to listen calmly, but, unable to control herself when he thus coarsely mentioned the parent to whom she had been devotedly attached, burst into tears, and hastened out of the room before he had nearly finished all he would have said about her wealth and importance, and the future management of her property, which, for some time at least, would chiefly rest with himself.

Evelyn returned to the library in a short time, and felt relieved by finding there only her father and Mr. Stanley. "My young friend," said the latter, taking her hand, "I respect your feelings too much to congratulate you now on being heiress to so fine a property as that which has devolved to you; but I must express my sincere wishes not only that you may long enjoy it, but also that you may—as I anticipate from your disposition—make a good use of the wealth and influence thus intrusted to you!"

"Thank you, thank you, Mr. Stanley. Indeed I hope I may—with my father's assistance," added she, turning timidly, yet affectionately, to Mr. Desmond, who, smiling tenderly, accepted the kindness without noticing her timidity—"and with your advice, too, Mr. Stanley," she added, sensible already of the difficulties arising from so many advisers.

"As you are now my ward," said Mr. Stanley, "you not only have a right to my best advice and assistance, but you may feel assured of my wish to promote your happiness as far as I can. I think, therefore, that the kindest thing I can do for you will be to solicit your father to act for me, and to give you that assistance and advice which his experience, as well as his affection, will render the more valuable. But till

we receive an answer to our communication to Mrs. Manvers, who is, you know, in a remote part of Cornwall, no plans can be finally settled."

Though Evelyn's spirit was subdued by grief, she felt indignant even now at the idea of being watched and governed by Mrs. Manvers, and secretly hoped that something might prevent her compliance with the desire expressed in Sir Connor's will. The same hope was secretly entertained also by Mr. Stanley, because he wished that Mr. Desmond might himself have the satisfaction of assisting him in the choice of a proper companion for his daughter.

In the mean time preparations were begun for Evelyn's removal to Ireland. Directions were written to the Irish agent to prepare Cromdarragh Castle for the reception of its young mistress. The books and all the other articles she wished to keep were packed up, and the house and furniture at G—— were prepared to be sold after her departure. Mr. Stanley proposed that Evelyn should travel with her father to Cromdarragh Castle, whither he and Mr. Driver would follow as soon as they had completed their business as executors at G——.

At length the answer from Mrs. Manvers arrived: much to Evelyn's vexation she "accepted the office which her uncle had allotted to her," because she felt that it would be ungrateful to decline it; "yet fearful," she added, "of her incompetence for so important a trust." However, she could not immediately leave her present residence, and it would not be possible to join Miss O'Brien at Cromdarragh Castle for some weeks.

"I wish she would remain where she is—I am sure I do not want her!" exclaimed Evelyn, on reading her letter.

Evelyn proposed that Mrs. Stanley and her daughter Violet should accompany Mr. Stanley to Ireland, and remain with her till Mrs. Manvers was at liberty; but Mrs. Stanley, judging it a favourable opportunity for her to become better acquainted with her father and his family, determined not to go to Ireland at present. It would have been natural for Evelyn to propose that Mrs. Desmond should meet her and her father at Cromdarragh Castle, and it did occur to her that

it would be proper ; but her horror of a stepmother, and the peculiar prejudice which she knew her grandfather had felt towards Mrs. Desmond, instantly overcame the idea.

"I will be my own mistress as far as I can," thought she ; "I want no companions nor directors. I shall be much happier alone with my father than I could be with a person whom I am sure I shall never like."

At last the day was appointed for the journey. Evelyn and her favourite companion, Violet Stanley, walked together for a long time the last evening, and formed many a plan and airy castle with that happy disposition to hope, which, even in the midst of sorrow, brightens the youthful view of the future. The parting with the Stanleys, whom she had known and loved since she was a little child, was painful ; and she felt it the more deeply, because, notwithstanding her Irish pride of birth, she had acquired a considerable degree of contempt for the Irish, even of her own class.

The evening before her departure Evelyn took leave of those servants who were to be dismissed, enhancing, by the kindness of her manner, the value of her gifts to each. Jane, her valuable and faithful Irish maid, was still to continue in her service.

With many a pang of regret Evelyn left the place where she had passed her happy childhood. As she gave a last look at her garden—"I am going," thought she, "to a place and a people new to me—strangers to me—and I shall have new duties that I never thought of till lately : and so young, too ! how shall I fulfil them ? Ah, how happy and tranquil I have been with dear grandpapa till now !"

CHAPTER IV.

Evelyn travels with her Father—The Bay of Dublin—Arrival at Cromdarragh Castle—The O'Brien Cry—The old Housekeeper.

THE morning of Evelyn's departure from G—— dawned brightly; and as she and Mr. Desmond drove through the neighbouring village, she thought it had never looked so beautiful.

Leaning out of the carriage window, she strained her eyes to take a last look of the ancient church where her grandfather was buried, till at length tears so dimmed her sight that she could not distinguish any object, and, sinking back into the corner, she sat for a long time in silence, thinking of the changes that had lately taken place.

She felt embarrassed by her present situation—travelling *tête-à-tête* with her father, whom she hardly knew, to whom she looked with awe, and whose affection she scarcely hoped to gain, having been so much separated from him in childhood. A confusion of fears, and fancies, and doubts distracted her mind—her natural pride strove with them—yet she made no attempt to speak to him.

Mr. Desmond also was silent for a long time, judiciously permitting her feelings to exhaust themselves, and anxious rather to study her disposition than to force her into conversation.

After some time, however, he began to try gradually to call her attention to the passing objects, with the hope of leading her dejected mind to some new subject.

Insensibly Evelyn became less timid and more cheerful, her reserve wore away, and before the close of the first day's journey she found herself conversing with her father unreservedly and at ease.

There are few parts of England which do not supply some

memorial of the history or of the customs of the olden time. At first, Mr. Desmond made no effort to direct her attention to such circumstances ; but he perceived, as her mind began to develop itself, that, when he alluded to the events which gave interest to the places through which they passed, it was evident she had not read idly, nor without reflection. In many respects she seemed to have formed just views on the subjects of which he spoke.

When Evelyn found that her father conversed freely with her as a companion, she was gratified ; and while he sometimes drew from her the knowledge she had acquired, or when by his conversation he excited a desire for more, her mind, unconsciously turned from the gloomy thoughts by which it had recently been occupied, easily yielded to the new ideas he suggested.

It was the character of her mind to rise with renewed elasticity after a painful pressure ; and as her spirits were gradually revived by change of scene and by the gentle endeavours of her father to set her at ease with him, her former habits of observation and inquiry returned.

Having been taken to England at an early age, Evelyn had scarcely any recollection of Ireland, and few associations to endear it to her ; but she loved it because it was her country, and from her grandfather she had imbibed a strong attachment to it ; yet such is the inconsistency of human nature, that she despised the Irish gentry, supposing them ignorant and vulgar, and expected to see a country without cultivation or beauty. With a natural degree of curiosity she questioned her father about Cromdarragh Castle ; but, unwilling to describe the place, lest she might anticipate too much, he gave slight answers to her inquiries.

A smooth passage across the Channel was a fortunate preparation for seeing everything in a favourable light. She was early on the deck ; and as the Bay of Dublin opened on her view, the mountains gilded by the morning sun, and the waters sparkling in its rays, Evelyn was in ecstasy. Such a scene she had never beheld, and great was her astonishment that her father had said so little of its beauty !

Fresh surprise awaited her in Dublin, where they quickly

arrived from Kingstown by the railway. The brightness of the morning made it appear to advantage, and she repeatedly expressed her admiration as they drove through it to an excellent hotel.

Business obliged Mr. Desmond to stay in Dublin for two days, and Evelyn was well pleased at the delay. After breakfast, when she was preparing to go out with her father, Jane was delighted by her reviving spirits as well as by her praise of Dublin, and she rejoiced more at her young lady's inclination to like her own country than at the wealth she had inherited.

They drove by all the principal public buildings, and then to the Phoenix Park; the varied scenery of which, contrasted with the bold features of the Dublin and Wicklow mountains, charmed her—so different from the country near G——, where she had passed her childhood. It was the middle of May, when the hawthorn thickets, in fragrant blossom, added another pleasure to her drive, and Evelyn thought she had never seen any place so charming.

Being the gay season of Dublin, many handsome equipages appeared in the streets, and her respect for the consequence and for the taste of the Irish gentry increased, and gave a little check to those ideas of her own importance which had been growing in her mind in proportion as she advanced near her own possessions.

Time did not permit of Mr. Desmond's introducing Evelyn to any of her family connexions in Dublin, as they were obliged to meet Mr. Stanley and Mr. Driver punctually at Crom-darragh; and it was with regret she left that city, much as she desired to see her castle. The first day's journey was through so uninteresting a country that her spirits were not much elated by its appearance, though her surprise was sometimes excited by its marked difference from England in many respects, particularly in the extensive tracts of bog that skirted the road, and the piles of drying turf, which, she said, were like little pyramids of black bricks, and which, to her astonishment, she learned were for fuel.

But the next morning everything looked more propitious; and as they advanced to the westward Mr. Desmond perceived

that the attachment which she had imbibed from Sir Connor to that part of the country was strongly awakened. After they had crossed the Shannon—that noble river which a liberal Government is now rendering navigable and beneficial to the nation—the appearance of the country altered, and the bleakness of the road, winding through bare valleys or up steep and tedious hills, was compensated in general by some fine ranges of distant mountains, rendered so beautiful by lights and shadows that they attracted Evelyn's attention from the bleak and desolate country through which they were passing. At length, to her great delight, trees appeared once more—they drove through a natural wood of some extent on the slope of the hill—and then arrived by a gradual ascent at an old-fashioned but handsome gateway, the entrance to Cromdarragh Castle.

The crowd of men, women, and children collected there cheered the travellers with heart-thrilling vociferations of welcome; and for some moments the carriage was stopped by the numbers assembled, many of whom expressing a strong desire to draw the carriage up to the castle, Mr. Desmond consented, though unwillingly.

Evelyn was alarmed at first, when she saw them take off the horses, and imagined they wanted to prevent her from taking possession; but her father quickly set her right, and, her fears quieted, she had an opportunity, as they slowly approached the castle, of observing the countenances of the people who, on each side of the carriage, unceasingly welcomed and cheered her in Irish. There was a look of kindness and good nature in every face, which dispelled the dread she had secretly felt from their loud and clamorous acclamations. She bowed and smiled in every direction, and received their affectionate reception most graciously.

Evelyn was surprised at the joy of the people, and proud of it; but it was not till she perceived how much her father was touched by the feelings they displayed that she thought of the value of such hearts, or felt the full force of the blessings and rejoicings they poured forth on the arrival of their young Tiarna,* as they called her. As she ascended the steps

* Chieftainess.

at the entrance her father warmly welcomed her to her castle, and the people exclaimed with one voice "Lamh-laidir-aboo!"* and the air resounded with the many repetitions of this ancient cry, attached from time immemorial to the O'Brien family.

The great door of the castle was open, and the housekeeper on the steps ready to receive the young mistress at the castle of her forefathers. She had lived there many years, and had known and loved Evelyn's mother, and tears filled her eyes when she beheld the strong resemblance of this young creature to one to whom she had been devotedly attached.

Evelyn had not expected such a castle. Accustomed to modern houses and lightsome rooms with large windows, the great hall, with its thick walls and small portion of light, looked dark and gloomy, and her spirits sank at the idea of living constantly in such a dull abode. Portraits of ancient warriors hung on the walls, many of which represented knights who had won by their chivalrous deeds, in the crusades, those banners that now waved beside them. Their two-edged swords of might, their spears and crossbows, were placed grotesquely on the pillars near them, while in the corners of the hall hung the armour which had been worn by those distinguished chiefs.

"These are my ancestors! how terrible they look—just like this castle!" exclaimed Evelyn.

As she spoke, the housekeeper opened the door of a small sitting-room, and Evelyn, entering, exclaimed again with surprise at the dark oaken wainscot. She had never seen anything like it; but the bright evening sunshine was reflected from the pictures and old-fashioned mirrors, with which the room was decorated, and she was satisfied that all the castle was not as gloomy as the hall. Looking out of each window one after another, she was delighted with the distant view and with the large old trees which spread beautifully over the sloping lawn.

After some time the old housekeeper returned, saying, "I beg your pardon for this interruption, Miss Eva (that is what I often called your mamma), but I am come to remind you

* Which signifies "the strong hand," and is pronounced *llaum-ledder* *aboo*.

that your people have been drinking to your health and long life, and now they wish to see you again before they go.

Evelyn looked hesitatingly at her father—"Yes, certainly, my dear—I ought to have thought of it. Come, and let your tenantry see you again." As he spoke he led his daughter to the great door of the castle. Again cheering her with one tremendous shout, and repeating the loyal cry, Evelyn started. Many coming up the steps, intent on taking her hand, her father perceived her shrink, but led her forward, saying to her in a low voice, "Show your confidence in the people!" and then, shaking hands himself with them, induced her to follow his example. Her presence of mind quickly returned, and she not only recovered her composure, but felt elated by the enthusiasm which had at first almost terrified her.

In reply to their warm and unanimous blessings Mr. Desmond said to them, "Yes, my good friends, she will deserve a blessing, I trust! and as my daughter is too young to speak for herself, I will assure you in her name that Evelyn O'Brien, the present representative of both the O'Briens and Desmonds, will never forget what is due to her name and to her faithful tenantry. While you are faithful and attached to her, your happiness will be her chief object."

"Oh, yes, indeed!" exclaimed Evelyn, again giving her hand to those near her, and looking round on all.

"Long may you reign over us! Every man of us will defend you with his heart's blood, and who else should we? for hav'nt you been over us hundreds and hundreds of years?—God bless you, my lady,—and you too, Mr. Desmond!"

They closed this address by a loud hurrah, upon which bonfires appeared to light up suddenly in the lawn and on some of the neighbouring heights; and, for a length of time, Evelyn heard in the distance the joyous shouts of the people, whose hearts were gladdened at the castle being once more inhabited. As the remains of daylight faded away, the bonfires appeared more and more brilliant, and, with all the animation of youth, she stood for a long time admiring the scene, and enjoying, with unrestrained but innocent pride, the certainty that her family had been beloved, and that she was welcome amongst her countrymen.

Her father stood beside her, silently reflecting on the past, and pondering on what the future might be to Evelyn. At length they were summoned to tea in the same wainscot parlour that she had already seen ; and, glad to rest after the fatigues of travelling and the excitement of her reception, she retired early.

But Evelyn could not sleep. She felt herself a new person — power and wealth rose up in every pleasing form before her imagination—schemes of generosity and munificence to her friends and dependants occupied her thoughts, and her heart beat high at the idea of all that she would do for Ireland—while from time to time she almost exclaimed, “Is this castle really mine?”

The next morning they met at breakfast, little refreshed by slumber. Mr. Desmond looked anxious and careworn. He led Evelyn through a suite of reception-rooms, stopping occasionally to show her some antique piece of furniture, or to tell her anecdotes or traditions connected with the pictures, which, all in perfect preservation, showed how much care had been taken of the castle.

“Here,” said Mr. Desmond, opening a room in the south-eastern tower, “here it was, my child”—he paused for a few seconds, while Evelyn eagerly awaited the rest of the sentence —“it was here,” he resumed, “that your beloved mother, *my* Evelyn, used to sit. Oh ! if these walls could speak, they might tell you so much of her goodness, her virtues, her charms !”—his voice faltered—the tears stood in Evelyn’s eyes—then, pressing her to his heart, he exclaimed, “May you be like her in excellence, and may it please Heaven to bless and spare you to me ! She was taken while yet in the bloom of youth and loveliness. You can never be as beautiful, but you may be as good !”

“May Heaven grant it !” said Evelyn, her tears flowing rapidly. Mr. Desmond’s thoughts reverting to times long gone by—Evelyn’s full of anticipation of all she would do in order to imitate her mother—they were both silent for some time. She determined to make that her own particular sitting-room ; and, going to a window which had been somewhat modernised and made to open on a stone balcony, her

exclamation of delight at the prospect recalled her father from his melancholy reflections.

The window looked upon a small lake, partly surrounded by heights diversified with trees and craggy rocks; in other parts smooth sloping verdant banks, with venerable trees shelving down into the water, while a range of distant mountains gave a striking finish to the scene. Immediately under the window was a small garden. The whole appeared a perfect paradise; and, putting on her bonnet, she begged her father to come out and show her the grounds and the gardens.

While she paused to look at the outside of the castle, Mr. Desmond explained to her the manner in which it had formerly been fortified, before the place was in some degree altered; and, in answer to her innumerable questions, told her of the sieges it had withstood in remote times, and spoke of the civilization and learning of the more ancient Irish, since nearly destroyed by the ravages of Danish invasion, and by the restless jealousy and aggressions of so many rival chieftains.

"You are pale," said Evelyn, looking at her father; "are you ill?"

"No, my love, I am not ill; but I could not sleep last night, and I feel languid in consequence. My heart was too full, the remembrance of the last time I was here was still too acute; for I have never passed a night in this castle since I lost your mother; and you are sometimes so like her! But I was not wholly occupied by those sweet though painful recollections—*anxiety for you*——"

"About me!—my dear papa, why anxious about me? I am well, and determined to be useful, and to make the people love me."

"Yes; I have no doubt of your disposition to endear yourself to them, and to be useful; but, Evelyn, your youth—your ignorance of the world—the opposing prejudices by which you will be swayed—the mistakes in judgment you will make—the many difficulties that may entangle you—the duties and responsibility of your situation—all conspire to render me anxious."

"Oh! but, papa, I will take care to judge very cautiously;

and I am sure if I am kind and useful I shall go on well." Mr. Desmond shook his head. "Nay, papa, do not look so doubtful; besides, you know I can apply to you for advice; and when Mrs. Manvers comes, she will take care that I do nothing silly," added Evelyn with a rather saucy look of confidence in herself; then, changing to her most persuasive voice and look, she continued, "And at least till she does come, will you not stay with me, papa? you will not leave me—for you know that dear grandpapa, though he forbade my residence with you, never prohibited your residing with me: will you not guide and direct me?"

"Were I to come here to reside entirely with you and direct your conduct, I should consider it virtually a breach of Sir Connor's injunctions; and, Evelyn, you forget that I have other ties and other duties."

"Other ties and duties! You mean your other children; cannot you bring them here? I wish indeed that you would!"

"You forget their mother—Mrs. Desmond."

"Oh! I—I did not think—of—my stepmother," said Evelyn, colouring.

"Do not give her that disagreeable appellation, my dear Evelyn. For my part, I can never for a moment separate my happiness from hers, for it has been her delight to promote mine for nearly fifteen years."

"Fifteen years!" said Evelyn, who, not knowing what to say, repeated the words mechanically. They were both silent for a few minutes, and then her father, who had mistaken her thoughts, recurring to her last words, said, "Yes, Evelyn—fifteen years. I see you are surprised at my having married in little more than a year after the loss of your mother, but peculiar circumstances obliged me to do so. Mrs. Desmond's father was going to India, and must have taken his daughter with him. Knowing her value, not only to myself, but, as I then imagined, to you, I determined to sacrifice the feelings which would otherwise have led to a much longer interval, and I married her a few days before her father sailed."

"I wish grandpapa had known these circumstances," said Evelyn.

"I did explain them all to him ; but when under any strong irritation, your otherwise kind and generous grandfather was not inclined to listen to any explanations ; indeed he at once shut the door to them, and, however deeply grieved at his displeasure, I felt that nothing more could be done on my part."

"I have often thought, my dear papa—indeed I am sure—that latterly grandpapa was inclined to feel much more kindly towards you ; and that, had he seen you in his last illness as he wished, he would not only have given me into your own care, but would also have made you his heir, which would have been so much more natural."

"No, no, my dear child, I was aware that you were to have all your grandfather's property ; and I assure you that my only disappointment is the not being permitted to be your guardian."

After a silence of some minutes, Mr. Desmond, giving her a letter which he held in his hand, said, "I find by this that Mrs. Manvers has again been obliged to delay, and cannot leave Cornwall till the middle of June, which I fear will be a disappointment to you."

"Not much indeed, papa ;—as I do not know her, I cannot look forward with any pleasure to her residence here ; it is just having a governess again, and I might as well have good Jane as the one I had formerly."

"I thought you knew Mrs. Manvers," replied Mr. Desmond, "your grandpapa's niece you know—and *your cousin*."

"Yes ; I remember seeing her sometimes, a long while ago ; but I do not feel acquainted with her—she went abroad. I know grandpapa used to say she was very amiable and unfortunate."

"She has been unfortunate—and is an amiable, interesting woman," said Mr. Desmond : "you should not consider her in the light of a governess, but as a companion and friend ; for it would be contrary to all propriety were you to reside here at your age without a suitable friend along with you ; and I think Sir Connor made a judicious choice in naming Mrs. Manvers."

"I wish, papa, if you cannot stay with me till she comes, that you would permit my little sister to come to me. I long to see Mabel!—and she would be a companion to me."

"When Mr. Stanley comes, he will make such arrangements as he thinks best for you, Evelyn, till Mrs. Manvers' arrival. As to your sister, I could not propose to her mother to intrust her to you, till she knows you herself. In any common case, it might be a natural compliment from you to visit Mrs. Desmond; but as in the present circumstances you must have Mr. Stanley's sanction, and as she is anxious to know you, I propose to bring her here in a few days."

Evelyn's countenance fell—she coloured—looked down—and knew not what to say; but the opportune arrival at that moment of Mr. Stanley and Mr. Driver relieved her from embarrassment, and gave a new turn to her thoughts.

CHAPTER V.

Arrangements for the Heiress — Her dislike of Control — Mr. Driver peremptory — Mrs. Desmond's Arrival — The Garden — Lily of Peru — German Custom of adapting Flowers to Seasons — Evelyn Angry — Her Good Humour returns with her Good Nature.

WHEN Sir Connor O'Brien made such peculiar provisions in his will, he probably little anticipated that his granddaughter would become his successor at so early an age; much less had he foreseen the difficulties to which he subjected her guardians.

Mr. Stanley and Mr. Driver were ignorant of everything relative to Ireland, and therefore obliged to have recourse continually to Mr. Desmond for information and advice. He naturally wished to remain with his daughter while they were at Cromdarragh Castle, and his knowledge and judgment were of essential advantage in the arrangement of Evelyn's affairs. Though at first delicate about giving his opinion, he soon perceived that for his daughter's sake, and for that of her tenantry, he ought not to stand too much on punctilio, and therefore readily assisted them whenever they applied to him; and as several leases had expired with Sir Connor's life, Mr. Driver found that in this part of the business Mr. Desmond's acquaintance with the character of the tenantry and the nature of the country were of infinite service.

The appointments to be made for the young heiress herself were attended also with difficulties. Mr. Stanley saw plainly that Evelyn, though too young to act for herself, did not like being dictated to; her wishes had always influenced her grandfather so much, that she was scarcely accustomed to submission, and still less inclined to it now.

Mr. Driver would have put an end to all the difficulty by the simple expression *it must be so*; but Mr. Stanley thought it the better way, though perhaps more tedious, to explain

their reasons to Evelyn, and endeavour to guide her judgment.

In the midst of these arrangements Mr. Desmond was suddenly called home by some unexpected business. Evelyn, having flattered herself that he would remain with her all the time Mr. Stanley and Mr. Driver were at Cromdarragh, was much disappointed, and reminded him how continually she required his assistance. Finding, however, that he was determined to go, she then affectionately urged him to return soon, and to bring her sister along with him.

"I intend to return to-morrow morning, my dear. I can say nothing at present about Mabel; but I will if possible bring Mrs. Desmond, who is impatient to meet my Evelyn."

Evelyn made no reply; her father drove away—and, returning to the drawing-room, she exclaimed, as she stood at the window looking at the carriage disappearing among the trees of the avenue—

"How much I should prefer being alone to having the company of my stepmother!"

Mr. Stanley looked at her with surprise, but said nothing, and continued writing without seeming to notice her. She felt the meaning of his look, and was silent. She was not happy however; sitting down on the sofa, she opened two or three books, but laid them down again—examined the old pictures—again looked out of the window—and after some time had passed, she said, "How long you have been writing, Mr. Stanley!"

"Yes, I have been making some necessary notes of our business here; and now I must go with Mr. Driver and the agent to inquire into the circumstances of a dispute between two of the tenants. You will be alone great part of this day, for we shall be detained a long time. I am sorry you have no companion; but I think I heard you say that you preferred being alone."

Evelyn, impatient of the rebuke his words conveyed, made no answer, but retired to her little cabinet in the tower, exclaiming, "Here at least I am mistress, and will admit neither intruders nor control!"

She sat down to enjoy her solitude; but soon feeling the want of employment, she began to consider how she should occupy herself; she altered the arrangement of her books—then of her furniture; and then formed numerous plans for improving the gardens and pleasure-grounds, with which she was not yet half acquainted. But none of these could be immediately begun; and though she had wished to be alone, she found it difficult to settle to any occupation. The old housekeeper came frequently to ask what was her pleasure in regard to many things about which Evelyn knew nothing; and she was interrupted by so many applications from the neighbouring poor for money or favours of some kind, that she soon found she could not enjoy her retirement without interruption, and that even there she was not quite her own mistress. She was at last so completely tired of her importance and her solitude, that, when Mr. Stanley and Mr. Driver returned at a late hour to dinner, she found it a relief to have them to speak to. Mr. Stanley talked a little to her in the evening about her establishment, and the income to be allowed for that, as well as for improvements and repairs of the place.

"I thought I was mistress of it all. Why then should my expenses be arranged for me?" said she.

"You will be mistress of all, my young friend, when you are of age," replied Mr. Stanley; "till that time comes, your guardians are enjoined to limit your income, and by submitting to that at present you will, I hope, lay the foundation for future ease and comfort. It is a wise rule never to spend the whole of your income."

"I should think that might be left to my own judgment!" said Evelyn.

"No, no,—it cannot, it cannot," said Mr. Driver; "it must be as Mr. Stanley has told you. Such a child as you are, in reality as well as in law, can have no judgment. We, your guardians, must limit you; and therefore you must regulate your expenditure accordingly. Now, have you calculated what your housekeeping will cost?"

"No, indeed!" said she, colouring, and looking much surprised at Mr. Driver. "I suppose my housekeeper knows!"

"Your housekeeper! Let me tell you, my young lady, you must look to it yourself, or nothing will go rightly."

"I do not understand anything of such particulars; besides, as you consider me such a child, *my* calculations would be of little use. But young as I am, I know that I ought to have a large income, not so much for my house, or my personal expenses, as to enable me to give to all who want, and to help my people when they apply to me for assistance."

"It is a disposition," said Mr. Stanley, "that I should be sorry to discourage, yet it should be indulged with discretion."

"Yes, I know—that I ought not to give to any one person more than I can afford with justice to other claimants; but as far as I can do it, you will not deny, Mr. Stanley, that I ought to give of my abundance to those who have little."

"When you indulge your generous inclinations," replied Mr. Stanley, "you ought to consider, that, in giving to all indiscriminately, you may do mischief instead of good. If you give money to all who are in want, no one will labour. Except in cases of illness or extreme distress, you will find it more advantageous to encourage people to help themselves, and to obtain by their industry the money that you are now inclined to give unconditionally; otherwise you will only increase the indolence and all the other faults which have been noticed in the Irish. Small loans I think better assistance than gifts, provided you are exact in requiring repayment, and do not heap one loan on another."

"I cannot imagine anything more selfish than hesitating to give to him who is distressed, while calculating how and when I am to be repaid!" exclaimed Evelyn. "Oh, Mr. Stanley, I did not think you were so narrow-minded!"

"Well, well," said Mr. Driver, "you will learn by experience what it is to bring a perpetual crowd of beggars to your door; but we have not yet decided anything about your establishment, Ma'am. Were Mrs. Manvers here, she might assist us."

"I think it best to defer the affair till to-morrow, when we shall be able to see these matters more clearly," said Mr. Stanley, looking significantly at Mr. Driver: "it is too late to think more of business to-night."

Mr. Driver assented, and they all retired early to rest, to the satisfaction of Evelyn, who abhorred Mr. Driver's minuteness of calculation, so unnecessary in her view, for her large income seemed to her inexhaustible.

The next morning Evelyn, afraid of being forced to attend to Mr. Driver's and Mr. Stanley's lessons on prudence, put on her bonnet as soon as breakfast was over and hastened to the shrubbery, into the overgrown thickets of which she was determined to penetrate.

At last, loaded with such flowers as she could find, and pleased by her ramble, she returned to the house, hoping her tormentors had gone out. She had just walked up the steps, and was standing there surveying the prospect from the great door, when a carriage drove up so rapidly that she had not time to retire. Mr. Desmond and a lady alighted; and her father, placing Mrs. Desmond's hand in hers, said, "Here, my dear Evelyn, is another friend, who is so much interested about you, and so anxious to embrace you, that, although far from well this morning, she would not postpone her visit."

As Mrs. Desmond bent towards her, Evelyn drew back a little, but, perceiving at a glance her sweet smile and attractive countenance, she accepted after a momentary hesitation the offered kiss. Trembling, agitated, and still holding Mrs. Desmond's hand, she stood for a short time; then, recollecting herself, led her to the drawing-room, and while repeating her welcome to her father her feelings were relieved by tears. Mr. Desmond saw the struggle in the mind of Evelyn, but the expression of her countenance when she ventured to look at Mrs. Desmond satisfied him that her childish prejudice would soon wear away.

Without appearing to notice the agitation of either, he gradually drew both into conversation on such subjects as he knew might interest without causing any collision of feelings; and with that true good breeding which is founded on consideration for others, he avoided all allusions that could remind them of their relative positions.

The idea that Evelyn had formed of Mrs. Desmond was she found perfectly different from the reality; she was equally

surprised at the elegance of her figure, the mild and benevolent expression of her countenance, and the gentle dignity of her manner, quite free from anything harsh or dictatorial.

Evelyn had carelessly thrown the roses she had been gathering on the table, and for some time they were forgotten; at length, selecting one of the sweetest, she presented it with diffidence but politeness to Mrs. Desmond, who received it graciously as the first conciliatory advance.

"I am glad to find your garden produces such roses; I was afraid it had been neglected," said Mrs. Desmond.

"It was in some degree overgrown and wild, but it is, I hope, capable of being easily put in order. I intend to improve it. I am so fond of flowers that I am determined to have good ones, and a profusion of them," said Evelyn.

Mrs. Desmond proposed going to the garden, which relieved Evelyn from the restraint and formality of this first visit, in which she could not feel at ease, though it was much less disagreeable than she expected.

"I can join in your fondness for flowers," said Mrs. Desmond: "the more we cultivate them the more we are charmed with their beauty; and happily their variety is so great that their cultivation is in the power of all who reside in the country; it seems, too, to be particularly adapted to our sex."

"I hope you do not mean to imply," said Mr. Desmond, "that it is one of those trifling arts which do not require any very profound talents or depth of knowledge."

"You will allow at least that it does not interfere with those more masculine pursuits in which we ladies are seldom permitted to take a part," replied Mrs. Desmond. "Besides, I think, gentlemen are very well pleased when, by our skill, their gardens and houses are ornamented with a succession of beautiful or fragrant plants."

"I gratefully acknowledge that," said Mr. Desmond; "but the cultivation of a garden is an innocent and very delightful occupation, if not carried to excess, which is objectionable in all pursuits; and it enlarges the mind by leading to other branches of knowledge. The nature of different soils, and the climates and peculiar habits of the various foreign plants which have been introduced into this country,

are absolutely necessary to the skilful gardener, and greatly increase the interest to all who are not contented to have flowers without any exercise of their judgment."

"I wonder," said Evelyn, "that the lower classes in Ireland do not cultivate flowers more than they seem to do; but, indeed, I have not seen much of the people yet."

"A taste for flowers," said Mrs. Desmond, "has certainly increased of late, and it always follows the advance of comfort; even in many small poor-looking cottages, a geranium may be seen in the window, or perhaps a rose-tree or holly-hock against the house. I try as much as possible to encourage the taste, but, unfortunately, the people are often too much distressed to be able to spare time or place for their cultivation."

"A value for flowers is characteristic of many nations even less civilized than the Irish," said Mr. Desmond.

"Yes, I remember," said Evelyn, "that Williams, the unfortunate missionary, says the inhabitants of some of the South Sea islands are so fond of flowers that they prefer them as ornaments to either shells or feathers. The Tahitans and others adorn themselves with wreaths of the most beautiful flowers, and their earrings consist of a single blossom suspended from the ear by the flower-stalk, in the same manner as the earring is fastened in this country."

"It is curious to observe," said Mr. Desmond, "the resemblance between the customs of barbarous and civilized nations. The Tahitan princess is probably as proud of her simple but fragrant ornaments as ladies in these regions are of their jewels and precious stones; the love of show, and the ambition to excel each other, acting equally on both."

"I do not think we ought to agree to that assertion," said Mrs. Desmond, "for I dare say Evelyn has as little value for jewels and show as I have; and yet I confess that a pearl earring would seem more suitable than the head of the little humming-bird, or of the pretty blue creeper, which are worn in the ears by one of the nations of Guayana."

"But, on the other hand," replied Evelyn, "perhaps we should prefer flowers to precious stones, if, like the simple-minded Tahitans, we supposed every fruit and flower

to be an emblem of some virtue or good principle, each bearing its distinct signification."

"Yes; that might alter the case," said Mrs. Desmond; "as in Germany I have been told that some sentiment or peculiar interest is attached to every flower. The odour of flowers seems associated with the qualities of the heart, as well as with times and circumstances, which, we all know, are recalled to our memory by peculiar scents. A German lady, a native of Bremen, told me that the seasons are fancifully distinguished by the succession of the colours of flowers, which are made to vary with the advance of the year. In early spring white, then yellow; as spring advances blue becomes the appropriate tint. Lilac and pink are supposed to be suited to summer; while the darker colours, such as crimson, purple, and deep red, are left to distinguish the approach of autumn."

"It is a pretty idea," said Mr. Desmond, "though fanciful; but the Germans are remarkable for imagination and poetry of mind, which, though not always connected with the more solid or necessary virtues, certainly lend a charm to daily life, by increasing our home enjoyments. I have always observed that your *very reasonable* matter-of-fact people have a narrower field of happiness, and, if put out of their usual course by illness or other circumstances, are more unhappy than those who have the resources which imagination adds to our more important consolations."

In the course of their walk through the gardens Mr. Desmond led the way to the stove, in which a few plants were still carefully cultivated by the gardener. Mrs. Desmond, smelling a *pancratium* lily, said it was a favourite of hers, for it was both fragrant and elegant.

"Yes," said Mr. Desmond; "but the golden *pancratium* is, I suppose, vastly superior to that, as it is considered of such importance in Peru, of which it is a native, that on some particular festivals, St. John's day for instance, every one is anxious to be decked with it. We ought to have had it on the joyful occasion of your return to your own country, Evelyn, as a suitable token of rejoicing."

"Oh, papa! You would not prefer a foreign lily to our

shamrock—the most appropriate as well as the most abundant ornament I could have? But I never have heard of that lily; why is it so remarkable?”

“From its beauty and fragrance,” replied her father, “and on great festivals the churches and houses in Peru are adorned with its festoons. It is called *Amencaes* in its own country; and is found in profusion in one valley in particular, which is named after it. The removal of the cattle on St. John’s day to the cool valley from the farmsteads is likewise a sort of festival; and on that day the inhabitants of Lima assemble on the grand *Alameda* or public walk, and thence proceed to the valley of the *Amencaes*. People of all ages and occupations meet there to join in the general rejoicing. Booths are erected on the hills, where refreshments are supplied to the visitors, who amuse themselves with music and dancing and walking, decorating themselves and their horses with those lilies. And I have read that the crowds returning to the city in the evening laden with those brilliant flowers appear in the sunshine like a stream of melted gold.”

“Those lilies must be as highly prized by the Peruvians as the rose is in Persia,” Evelyn remarked.

“True; indeed still more so, I think; for when the poor women and children approach the houses of their masters on great days, they strew those or other flowers before the door. But, while talking of the plants of other countries, we are forgetting your intended improvements, my dear Evelyn. In laying out a garden we should try to ensure its beauty by arranging a succession of flowers to ornament it during as large a portion of the year as possible.”

“Certainly,” said Mrs. Desmond, looking towards Evelyn. “Let us consider then what Evelyn should plant in this sunny place, so well sheltered from the north and east. Come, Mr. Desmond, what do you suggest?”

Just at that moment Mr. Stanley came to the garden, and Mr. Desmond, on introducing him, said they had been considering of improvements in the garden, and that, under Mrs. Desmond’s direction, Evelyn might make it a charming spot—her taste would be such an advantage to Evelyn.

“No doubt,” said Mr. Stanley, glancing towards Evelyn,

whose countenance however did not respond to the idea. He observed, as the colour mantled in her cheek, a strong expression of disdain and displeasure; but without noticing it he immediately entered into conversation with Mrs. Desmond, and found her refined and gentle manners very different from the notion he had formed of Irish ladies. Evelyn meanwhile, offended at the bare idea of Mrs. Desmond's directing her about her own garden, in her own demesne, where she was sole mistress, resolved to show her father that she would not submit to be directed or controlled by any stepmother in the world. During the rest of the walk she was silent, or, when spoken to, replied only by monosyllables. Any one who had read her thoughts might have reasonably imagined that her good humour would not return while Mrs. Desmond was at Cromdarragh Castle.

When they returned at last to the house, after a hot and tiresome walk, Mr. Stanley drew Mr. Desmond into one of the deep windows of the drawing-room to discuss business, and for some time neither Evelyn nor Mrs. Desmond spoke. After a long pause Evelyn, who had sat with her eyes bent on the ground, feeling that she ought to pay some attention to her guest, made an insipid remark by way of conversation; receiving no answer, she sullenly raised her eyes to Mrs. Desmond, and perceived her pale and almost insensible. Quite shocked, she called loudly to Mr. Desmond, and in an instant all other feelings were forgotten—all, but sympathy with her father, and interest for the pale and suffering invalid. She hastily rang for water, went herself to the housekeeper for the proper remedies, and was as anxious now as she had been indifferent about her a few moments before. In some time Mrs. Desmond revived—her colour began to return a little—Evelyn's eyes sparkled with pleasure, and no one could have supposed that the same countenance could in so short a time have expressed such opposite feelings. It was easy to awaken an interest in Evelyn's mind by illness or distress, for her pride and wilfulness, in fact, sprang less from the heart than from a childish dislike of control. All her prejudices faded away for the moment, giving place to the natural benevolence of her disposition.

When Mrs. Desmond had quite recovered, she expressed her thanks so tenderly that Evelyn's eyes filled instantly, and she involuntarily kissed the hand which Mrs. Desmond had put into hers.

Her father perceived, with secret satisfaction, that Evelyn was already softened, and foresaw that Mrs. Desmond would soon gain her affection and acquire an influence over her.

Mrs. Desmond then consented to lie down, and, conducted by Evelyn, retired to the room which had been prepared for her.

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Driver's Prejudices — Mischiefs of Party — Evelyn's Wish for Power — Education — Good Example.

MRS. DESMOND came down before dinner quite refreshed.

Mr. Driver was then introduced to her, and she thought with Evelyn that there could not be a more unprepossessing countenance.

In reply to the inquiries about her illness, she said it was of no consequence—"merely caused by having stood too long in the heat of the sun."

"Heat of the sun in Ireland!—a pretty story truly," said Mr. Driver, "that the heat in this country could overcome any one!"

"Before I came to Ireland I certainly thought of Irish sunshine in the same manner," said Mr. Stanley; "but I must say I have sometimes found it too much. This climate is always represented as wet and cold."

"Our abundant harvests contradict that statement at once," said Mr. Desmond; "and when you have seen more of Ireland you will find how little you can depend on the broad assertions of those who judge as hastily of the inhabitants as of the climate. An intercourse of a few hours is sufficient for people who write from mere theory, or from the representations of party."

"Yes—party is the source of mischief and misrepresentation in many places beside Ireland," exclaimed Mr. Stanley.

"You have mistaken my meaning," replied Mr. Desmond; "I spoke of the manner in which Ireland is described in books; I meant that the authors had listened to one or other party singly, without taking time to compare opposite statements—to observe or judge for themselves. This is one of the numerous bad effects of party,—and no one can deprecate the division of interests more than I do."

"To which party, then, do you belong, papa?" said Evelyn.

"To none—I see the errors of each; wherever there is strong party feeling there must be error, because the warm feelings of our nature hurry us on to decide without sufficient reflection, or the smallest attempt to disentangle truth from misrepresentation."

"It is always a difficult thing to attempt," said Mr. Stanley, "and here it must be perfectly hopeless; while you are reflecting systematically on truth and prejudice, all your neighbours may destroy one another."

"Not so, my dear Sir. I have had many years' experience, the result of which is, that the people respect those who are not afraid to be just—they are faithful and attached to all who act with kindness and justice together: I find that this is the case in other parts of Ireland, as well as among my own tenantry. Attention to their comfort, along with invariable justice, wins their hearts."

"Dear papa," said Evelyn, anxiously, "how shall I ever be able to manage my tenantry—to make them happy—and to see always what line of conduct will be most just?"

"At present, my dear, you are too young to attempt any interference with them, except by assisting the distressed and encouraging the industrious. Your agent will manage everything relating to your tenantry, under the direction of your guardians."

"It would be rather vexatious, however, if I was to be treated like a child, and not be allowed to attend myself to the interests of my people!" said Evelyn, with a toss of the head.

"*Your people*, my dear!—you speak as if you were a queen. You would soon find, were you so imprudent as to attempt it, how irksome, nay, how impossible it would be for you to manage such intricate affairs. But you must not interfere."

"Must not!" said Evelyn haughtily, and colouring up.

Her father smiled at her childish waywardness, and then continued mildly—"But although you *must not* interfere in matters of that kind, you will still find a wide field for your

exertions to promote the welfare of your tenantry, and that is, I am sure, more your real object than mere power."

"But if I am to have no power, I do not know what I can do. Indeed, it would be better for me to live in England than in such a place as this, where I am to have no part in my own concerns."

"My dear Evelyn," said her father, "are you not proving at this moment, by your misunderstanding what I said, how little qualified you are to judge of what may be for the advantage of your tenantry, or to take part in your own concerns, as you say? You little know how much the peace of this country depends on the adjustment of the difficulties that must arise between the proprietors of large estates and their tenantry. There is, however, as I have already said, a vast deal which you can effect, if you are kind to the people and continue a resident."

"How do you mean, papa?"

"By your presence and exertions you may promote the comfort and improvement of *your people*, as you call them, by your personal encouragement of industry and of education."

"Oh! yes, I know," said Evelyn; "I intend to have them all taught to read and write immediately."

"I do not mean merely reading and writing," replied Mr. Desmond; "I would say every branch of useful work; and above all, instructing them how to be neat and orderly as well as industrious."

"They will learn all that of course, papa, at the school I intend to have."

"Yes, my dear, the rudiments, but not the practice—that must follow after school education is over; then will come the time when your influence and encouragement will be essential. I am sure Mr. Stanley agrees with me in those suggestions; and as to Mrs. Desmond, I can only say that when you come to Clonallen you shall see how much can be quietly effected by judicious activity when applied only to what is within a woman's sphere."

Evelyn was going to ask Mrs. Desmond if she had such a numerous tenantry as that of Cromdarragh, but checked herself, thinking it was not polite, because she considered her

property and tenantry beyond all comparison with her father's; and Mr. Stanley, who had listened attentively to her father, prevented her from replying, by asking several questions about the education of the peasantry. He, like many others who know little of Ireland, imagined that no exertions for the instruction of the lower orders had been made till lately, and he was surprised at learning all that had been already done by Mr. Desmond's father, as well as by many of his contemporaries.

"But when they have been educated," said Evelyn, "how shall we make them what they ought to be?"

"If all our gentry," said Mr. Desmond, "could agree in the object and method of education, and in the mode of encouragement afterwards; and above all, if they could give regular employment—which is not only the source of maintenance and comfort to the people, but preserves them from falling into the snares of bad company—we should have a very prosperous and peaceable peasantry."

"I wish," said Mr. Stanley, "that the gentry of Ireland could be convinced of the mutual advantage to themselves and their people that would be derived from their residence on their property; they do not consider how much their importance would be increased, nor what powerful effects result from example."

"Yes—what an example is set by some who do reside in Ireland!" replied Mr. Desmond; "I could point out several whose residence on their estates has had the happiest influence on the comfort and civilisation of the peasantry, and others whose agents in a great degree fill their place by residing on the property. They have established many admirable schools, Evelyn; and, being empowered to give encouragement and assistance to the tenantry, when inclined to improve their land, have essentially served the people, by attending to their wants and comforts, and thus acting as proper representatives of their employers."

"You surprise me extremely," said Mr. Stanley; "I had understood that Ireland was neglected by all her great landed proprietors, and that very little was done for the Irish except establishing schools with the public money."

"If you will come with us to Clonallen House," said Mr. Desmond, "I will show you what has been done in my neighbourhood alone, and also what Mrs. Desmond and I have attempted in a very limited manner to effect, and what has been our success."

Dinner was just then announced, and Evelyn forgot her anxiety about her tenantry in her desire to do the honours as lady of the castle.

CHAPTER VII.

Legends of the Family — Mr. Driver's anxiety to return to London — Evelyn's dislike to him and to his Control — Conquers herself — Mrs. Desmond's Influence — Evelyn grateful to her.

CONTRARY to Evelyn's expectations, the evening was not tiresome. Mrs. Desmond's manners were gentle and engaging, and her conversation lively and so full of amusing anecdote, that Evelyn forgot her imaginary prejudices, and readily joined in it.

Mr. Driver, who thought only of business, would fain have taken that opportunity to discuss the household arrangements for Evelyn, and the restrictions which he was determined to make in regard to her expenditure; but her father interposed, and, by imperceptibly leading to other subjects, saved Mrs. Desmond from Mr. Driver's continually applying for her opinion about minute arrangements. He thus prevented the irritation which he saw would be excited in his daughter's mind by any injudicious attempts to exercise over her proud spirit the authority which, though possessed by her guardians, ought, he thought, to be more gently urged on one so long accustomed to indulgence, and who now, full of her young importance, was determined against control. Evelyn shrank from interference as from something noxious; the haughty desire to rule, and the natural childishness of her mind, producing sometimes a laughable and contradictory effect upon her manners.

Mr. Desmond, who was better acquainted than its little mistress with the treasures of the old library, produced some admirable engravings, and also a collection of curious family records, from which he selected a few for the amusement of Mr. Stanley. The subject of the greater part of these legends and memoirs were only family feuds and wars between the petty kingdoms of Ireland; but Mr. Desmond,

who had studied and translated many of them, knew where to find those which related noble and generous actions, or displayed the bravery of many native chieftains who had distinguished themselves in the defence of their country.

Evelyn had often heard her grandfather detail some of those remarkable narratives, but she had listened as a child does to a tale—without feeling any personal interest in them. Now, however, she heard them with altered feelings: she was the representative of that ancient house, and she felt that its honours and its fame centred in her—it seemed as if she herself shared in its glory.

The antiquity of the manuscripts from which Mr. Desmond selected the annals that he read increased Mr. Stanley's interest about Ireland, and made him wish to know more of the former history of such a nation, and, above all things, to be made acquainted with its antiquities. Mr. Driver, on the contrary, wondered how any one could derive pleasure from hearing barbarous histories of people with barbarous names; and once or twice he could not refrain from saying that their time might be much better employed in considering the arrangements for Miss O'Brien, which only could have induced him to risk his life by coming to such a country.

The ancient buildings of Ireland having become the subject of conversation, many fine remains in the very county where Cromdarragh Castle stood were mentioned; and in turning over the pages of Grose's *Antiquities*, Mr. Stanley chanced to find a pencil sketch of a ruined abbey, the beauty of which pleased him so much that he declared he would stay an additional day on purpose to see it, if at all within his reach.

"I hope you will let us settle all our business first," said Mr. Driver. "I have an appointment in London on Tuesday next, and it is impossible for me to waste my time here listening to these traditions and examining ruined castles; indeed, I might get away to-morrow morning if Miss O'Brien had thought proper to listen to me when I wished to speak to her on business, and to direct her in regard to the allowance which we think it will be proper to appoint for her maintenance."

"I am sorry I have detained you," said Evelyn, colour-

ing from a mixed feeling of vexation at his mode of speaking, and of delight at the thoughts of his departure. "I am ready to listen to you now if you like; but I hope, Mr. Stanley, you are not obliged to travel with Mr. Driver: I hope you will stay a long time, that papa and I may show you all the venerable antiquities of our dear green isle."

"I fear that I can command but very few days now," replied Mr. Stanley; "but it will be my duty, as well as my wish, to visit you again; and then I shall hope that you and Mr. and Mrs. Desmond will assist me to see everything *really*—that is, with the eyes of an inquiring observer, not those of the fashionably rapid travellers who, as Mr. Desmond says, hurry from place to place, and then imagine they know the character of the inhabitants; I assure you I shall not be contented to travel so. In the mean time we must, as Mr. Driver judiciously remarks, bring our business to a close. 'Business before pleasure' ought always to be our motto, my dear Miss O'Brien; and when our business is completed, perhaps a letter may come, which will, I hope, give me time to visit that beautiful abbey."

The next morning Evelyn came down determined to give her attention patiently to all Mr. Driver's tiresome details. When they began, soon after breakfast, to discuss these arrangements, she summoned her father to join them; but, to her vexation, Mrs. Desmond came with him, and, though Mr. Stanley immediately expressed his great satisfaction at having her assistance, Evelyn mentally resolved she would not submit to be dictated to by her, and that she should have no part in the management of her affairs.

How fortunate that we do not live in the Palais de la Vérité! Open war, or reproach, or remonstrance and accusation would occupy half our time, and we should never practise that self-restraint which at once preserves domestic peace, and gives us opportunities of becoming acquainted with the real worth of those whom at first, from some slight cause, we are inclined to dislike. The rising feelings of discontent and anger are more easily repressed in silence than when embodied in words; and the habit of polite consideration which we acquire in good society for those around

us overcomes in a great degree the natural selfishness of our nature, which would otherwise dispose us to think only of our immediate gratification.

Evelyn, prepared to be dissatisfied with all that was to be settled, prudently determined to listen in silence, and then to make her objections. To her great surprise, however, it was speedily agreed that she should have at her own disposal an income fully adequate to her present situation.

Mr. Driver had yielded to Mr. Stanley's arguments. His proposal that the income should be under the control of Mrs. Manvers, and the management of the house confided to her, was also set aside in this morning's discussion by Mrs. Desmond, to whom both he and Mr. Stanley appealed. It was her opinion that Evelyn, though so young, was perfectly capable of overcoming all the mysteries and difficulties of managing her establishment; and that, housekeeping and account-keeping being feminine accomplishments which must be acquired at some time of a lady's life, it was desirable for her to begin immediately to learn the value of money and to distinguish between real and unreal wants—between the expenses which would be suitable to her position in society and those which would be idle or extravagant. However little inclined to be pleased with Mrs. Desmond, Evelyn was now charmed by her opinion, though surprised, for she little expected that any interference on her part would have been in favour of her wishes. Aware of Mr. Driver's narrow views, she had prepared herself for a determined opposition; but happily no opposition, no remonstrance was necessary, for Mrs. Desmond's calm judgment had influenced even Mr. Driver, and Evelyn found that, notwithstanding her resolution to allow of no interference from her stepmother, it was, in fact, to her decision that she owed the gratification of her wishes. Pride might perhaps have prevented any immediate acknowledgment of her influence had Mr. Driver allowed an opportunity, but he was so persevering in his calculations, and so anxious to keep Mr. Stanley's mind intent on business—a difficult thing in his opinion—that Evelyn could only just look at all the statements he gave her, half listening to his explanations, and to his oft-repeated advice

to be economical, and to be cautious how she trusted the people about her. At length they were summoned to luncheon, and, to her great satisfaction, Mr. Driver departed soon afterwards, giving her the assurance, however, that he would duly return for the rent-day in the November following.

"How glad I am," exclaimed Evelyn, as he drove away, "that that man is gone, and that we have conquered him! I should not like, indeed, to obey his orders, and about my own money, too."

"Let your prudence, then, my dear Miss O'Brien," said Mr. Stanley, "show that you are capable of managing your 'own money' without our interference, for you must still consider yourself as responsible to us, though in some degree mistress of it; that is to say, as far as the annual income allowed to you extends. I am afraid you will find yourself unequal to all you have undertaken, and that from your inexperience you will sometimes feel the want of advice."

"Yes, it is natural that I should; but then I know now where to find a friend who will assist and counsel me, I am sure," said she, taking Mrs. Desmond's hand; and, looking kindly at her, she added, "a friend to whose influence I already owe my thanks."

Mr. Desmond had observed the struggle between the coldness of pride and the natural warmth of a grateful heart—between prejudice and truth: he was delighted to see that Evelyn's heart was sensible to kindness, and that her good and generous feelings were thus awakened by justice to one whom she had previously resolved to dislike.

The remainder of the day was devoted to examining the gardens and grounds again, and in planning some improvements, in which Evelyn joined with good humour, showing much good taste, but total ignorance of the expense of alterations, and indifference to that part of the subject.

The evening passed agreeably. Evelyn was pleased at the victory she had gained, not only over Mr. Driver, but over herself, and was therefore willing to be pleased with every one.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Ruined Abbey — Remote Times of Ireland — The Sacred Isle of the West — Civilization — Phœnicians, Danes, Anglo-Normans — Irish Language.

As Mr. Stanley feared that he could only stay one day longer, it was determined the next morning that the whole party should drive to a ruined abbey in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Desmond's delicate health made her unequal to much fatigue; but as there was such an improvement in Evelyn's manner, her father was desirous to promote an intimacy by that mutual interest which a common object of inquiry excites, and he encouraged Mrs. Desmond to venture.

The drive was partly along a narrow by-road, overhung by old thorn hedges, with their wreaths of bramble-flowers and great bind-weed; while above them a few venerable elm and ash trees stretched their ivy-covered branches. Alighting from the carriage at some yards from the ruins, Mr. Desmond led them to the most perfect view of the abbey. Evelyn was delighted with the scene; and Mr. Stanley was much struck by the picturesque appearance of the structure, and by its remarkable situation on the banks of a small sequestered lake, surrounded by near and distant hills of varied form, rising one above another, and placed in the midst of rich productive fields. The east window was still nearly perfect in its tracery; the cloisters surprised Mr. Stanley by their beauty, and he confessed to Mr. Desmond, when examining the window, that he had not been aware of such buildings being in Ireland; and, while expressing his admiration, playfully contrasted those remains of ancient art with the present miserable dwellings of the people.

As they returned, Mr. Stanley was silent for some time; at length he exclaimed, "Ireland surprises me more and more every day! I had very little knowledge of either the country or the people as they now are, and still less of its

ancient history. I do not, indeed, recollect any mention of it in history previous to the invasion of Henry II."

"But I thought," said Evelyn, "that Ireland was known very early as one of the western islands. My grandfather told me so, I am sure."

"Yes—you are right," said Mr. Desmond: "it may be found distinctly and separately mentioned under various names by several ancient writers as having been known long before the Christian era to the Greeks, who, it appears, maintained a frequent intercourse with it."

"I must acknowledge," said Mr. Stanley, "that I do not recollect having seen that fact stated anywhere; but I have no doubt of your correctness, Mr. Desmond; and should like to find some account of that intercourse between Ireland and the nations of the East."

"It appears," said Mr. Desmond, "that Ireland was considered by the ancients as the Sacred Isle of the West, where the gardens of their fabulous paradise were placed, as well as the revered oracle to which, in those times of heathen worship, they had recourse. There is much reason to think that this intercourse was established even anterior to the earliest voyage of which there is any record."

"You do not mean the Argonautic expedition, which is, I believe, among the earliest!"

"Yes, I do," said Mr. Desmond, smiling at Mr. Stanley's surprise; "and you will be still more astonished to find that strong reasons have been given by some learned men for supposing that expedition to have been made in fact to Ireland."

Mr. Stanley laughed at the idea of Ireland ever having produced a golden fleece, or any valuable object for an adventurous voyage. Mr. Desmond good-humouredly said that he would not press the truth of that tradition; though the invasions in modern times of the Spaniards, the Danes, and the English were strong proofs, without going so far back as Jason, that this country must have had some powerful attractions; and that there was no doubt that allusions to it are found in many classic writers, who, as well as some Irish historians, give us reason to believe that this island was early

peopled from the East—possibly by a branch of the wandering Pelasgi, who seem to have dotted themselves about in various regions of the earth.

Evelyn listened with eager attention to her father—often on the point of interrupting him with numerous questions which suggested themselves to her; but Mr. Stanley's "Pray proceed" prevented her from speaking, and Mr. Desmond continued his sketch.

"It has been asserted by some authors," he continued, "that at a later period the Phœnicians planted other colonies here,* and introduced the worship of Baal or Fire; so many apparent remains of which are still in existence that the circumstance seems scarcely to admit of doubt. For my own part, I see no other way of accounting for those remains; and though not actually descended from the ancient Irish myself, I feel quite convinced of their antiquity; indeed there are some points of similarity in even the present customs of the people to those of the East which might tend to confirm the

* In confirmation of this opinion it may be remarked that several articles of ancient bronze have from time to time been found in Ireland, one of which—a bronze vessel, now in the collection of the Earl of Rosse—was lately described by the Rev. Dr. Robinson, at a meeting of the Royal Irish Academy.

This bronze vessel was found at a considerable depth in a bog in the King's County. Its contents, celts, gouges, bells of singular construction, spears, and hunting-horns, were all formed of the most beautiful hard bronze. The style of workmanship, evident in the various articles, proves no mean skill in their fabrication, and the component parts of the metal itself are in the most just proportions, according to the results which Dr. Robinson had uniformly found in analysing other bronze arms and utensils.

"Bronze contains tin, which metal may be said to be almost confined to the south-west of England; therefore the bronze trade must have originated with persons in communication with Britain. But in ancient history we find only one people of whom this can be reasonably supposed—the Phœnicians, who were great manufacturers and merchants in olden time, and had factories, if not colonies, in Spain. The traces of Phœnician intercourse in Ireland, exhibited in the traditions of the Irish, are supported by the mixture of Punic words in their language, and by usages which show that the worship of Baal, and other Sidonian rites, had once prevailed in this island. All we know of early antiquity shows that the bronze trade was in their hands, and the traffic must have continued in Ireland and other Atlantic lands till the fall of Carthage."

idea of their eastern origin. But many other nations may perhaps have planted colonies in this fertile island in remote ages, and may have thus produced the great variety of our tribes or septs."

"It would be interesting," said Mr. Stanley, "to devote some time to the examination of those remains, and also to your ancient manuscripts, with the view of throwing light on their origin. I should like to ascertain the state of Ireland in the earliest times of the Christian era."

"I believe there can be no doubt," replied Mr. Desmond, "that the arts of civilization existed in Ireland even as a Pagan nation—but certainly soon after the Christian era. In the second century we find that, in consequence of the long-existing intercourse between this island and the Eastern world, Greek missionaries implanted Christianity here, which brought in its train, as it has wherever it has extended, a marked improvement in manners, and morals, and learning. It is certain that in very early times colleges were established in Ireland, even long before those of Pavia and Paris; and I am sure you must recollect that in the time of Charlemagne the heads of those two universities were learned Irishmen. But the Danes, lured by our rich lands, made their first invasion A.D. 785; and from that time Ireland has deeply suffered from the repeated descents of those ferocious hordes, as well as of the Anglo-Normans; and still more by the mismanagement of its conquerors for succeeding centuries. The oppression and consequent resistance—the rapine, bloodshed, and want of good faith on each side—but I will only add that it is a most painful subject of reflection."

"It is, indeed," said Mr. Stanley. "I deeply regret that England did not better understand the character of the Irish people. But I hope that time has passed away; and that now those who have the power may also have the discernment to see how to raise Ireland from the depression of hundreds of years."

"I hope it," said Mr. Desmond: "yet I fear"—

"Fear what, papa?" exclaimed Evelyn; "fear is a word that neither a Desmond nor an O'Brien should use! And why should we fear that we shall not now have our rights?"

Cannot we fight for them? Let us all unite, if necessary—men and even women—to obtain justice. I will myself join”—

“Hush! hush! my dear child; do not give way to such idle feelings. Are you so ignorant as not to know that Ireland has several times weakly rebelled, and fought and bled in vain? Can you possibly wish to renew the horrors of civil war? This is really too childish. Remember, too, that Christ enjoined his followers to obey those who are in authority. Endeavour rather to promote peace and good order, by your influence, by your example, and by the steady aid you may give to that important and useful object—education.”

Evelyn looked mortified at her father's rebuke. She could with difficulty repress that natural overflow of patriotism which the idea of injustice excites in a youthful heart; and her cheek was still glowing, when Mr. Stanley, repeating the word with which her father had ended—“*Education*”—endeavoured to impress on her mind that educating the poor and giving them habits of industry must be the first step towards the attainment of those rights she advocated: “and, above all,” added he, “let the education be sound—let it rest on the only sure foundation—Scripture; be assured that if you exclude religion from education the result can never have the civilizing effect you would desire.”

“I will endeavour to do as you advise,” said Evelyn, with a subdued voice.

“And begin by teaching English,” he added; “for I observe that many of your tenants express themselves but indifferently in English. In some houses that I entered I found them reading—but what?—books in their own language! This can only perpetuate their barbarism.”

“I must there disagree with you, my dear Sir,” said Mr. Desmond, interrupting him. “Your opinion is natural, but I think you will find it a mistaken one. It has been ascertained by the experience of some years that teaching them to read their own language leads to learning English: it is a fact proved in numerous instances. And you will probably be convinced of the advantage of instructing the people to read Irish when you see what the consequences have been in some parts of Ireland.”

Evelyn was astonished at this; for, like many others, she supposed the most important part of the education of the lower orders was to teach them English.

After a silence of some minutes she said to Mr. Stanley, "I am determined to have a good school for all the poor; and when you next visit me I hope to show you a more civilized peasantry."

"Say rather a more comfortable peasantry—more sensible of the advantage of order and neatness," he replied. "I have seen much intelligence and kindness of heart among the poorest people here; but still I hope they may learn to speak English, as it is disappointing not to understand them when one wishes to know their sentiments."

"The two languages may be taught at once," said Mr. Desmond. "They should go hand in hand; and were we at my home, I could show you instances of the good effects of this method."

"You shall soon see instances of it here too. Perhaps you may hear by report of the success of my school long before you come next to see me!" said Evelyn.

"I shall be much more pleased to see its success here, than to hear of it through general report," said Mr. Stanley. "I prefer that sort of usefulness which works by steady perseverance without ostentatious display."

"As to display, you know, dear Mr. Stanley, I cannot prevent people from observing and talking; but the steadiness depends on myself."

The conversation was here interrupted by their arrival at home; and the subject was not resumed in the evening.

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Stanley's Visit prolonged — O'Briens and Desmonds — Arrows of Black Oak — Evelyn's Zeal for Liberty — Mr. Desmond's Advice.

THE next morning Mr. Stanley received letters which, to the satisfaction of the whole party, enabled him to prolong his visit for a few days. He was much pleased at Mr. Desmond's invitation to accompany him on Monday to Clonallen, as he hoped to become still better acquainted with him at his own house, and to see more of a country and a people which interested him much more than he could have foreseen. He was also very desirous that Evelyn should overcome her prejudices completely, and by seeing Mrs. Desmond in her own family, learn to love her, and to benefit by her example. But Evelyn, vexed at his leaving Cromdarragh Castle while in Ireland, and annoyed at his suggestions as to her stepmother, determined she would be on this occasion her own mistress, and declared that she preferred remaining at home. Though pressed by her father and Mrs. Desmond to come to Clonallen, in order to enjoy so much more of Mr. Stanley's company, she repeated her refusal to accompany them. Afterwards, when out walking with Mr. Stanley, he urged her to go, suggesting several reasons for her doing so; but, as she more than hinted that she would not have Mrs. Desmond forced on her as a model, he remained silent, knowing that a perverse resolution is strengthened by opposition. When they came in she retired to her cabinet, discontented and uncomfortable, because conscious of error.

Various contradictory feelings struggled in her breast: she regretted the happy time when to please her grandfather was her chief pleasure and her chief duty—an object in which she seldom failed: she was vexed at the idea of her fancies being interfered with by others; and even while inconsistently regretting her former childhood, determined that she would not submit.

After indulging this little burst of temper for two hours in solitude, she recollected that, as her guest, Mrs. Desmond ought not to be neglected, and returned to the library, conscious that she was wrong, but too proud to acknowledge it. However, she found her importance was not so great as she had imagined—no one noticed her absence nor return, and her father and Mr. Stanley continued, without any pause, the conversation in which they were engaged. Her father had been saying that many Anglo-Normans, who had possessed that part of the country where Cromdarragh lay, had at length been expelled by one of the great Irish families—a powerful tribe, who, after many a hard-fought battle, drove the invaders away. Thence arose “that sort of separation between our families—mine being Anglo-Norman, as my name shows,” said he—“but, like an heirloom, it has been preserved from generation to generation.”

“But though worsted here, had not the Desmonds possessions in other parts of Ireland, where they still retained power?” asked Mr. Stanley.

“Yes, I must confess,” replied Mr. Desmond, “that my ancestors were not very moderate in helping themselves to the rich lands of Erin. They had an extensive territory in Kerry, where, at one time, the Desmond was almost a prince. But there, too, we became unfortunate. After many attempts of the native Irish to dispossess us, the Moriartys were victorious in a bloody battle fought on Connor Hill. Beaten in fight, and afterwards forced to yield to those who obtained grants of our property from the English Government, the Desmond family sank into comparative insignificance, and have so continued—perhaps a just punishment on the descendants of such rapacious invaders.”

“And what has been the result, my dear Sir?—has the triumph of the Moriartys continued?”

“No, Sir—in their turn they were forced to give way to others; but the present generation will perhaps make the name more justly famous than any of their warlike ancestors, by their exertions to promote the religious instruction of the poor. I wish that you, who doubt the advantage of teaching the Irish to read in their own language, could see the effect of

what the Moriartys and another excellent resident family have done, as I saw when in Kerry last year—the deep interest and attention of the peasantry when receiving instruction at the schools, or when joining in our church service, and when listening to a sermon—all in their own tongue. But to return to the battle which I mentioned. It is a curious fact that there are still found on the hill, where that great struggle took place, arrows of black oak, great numbers of which have been picked up at different times. I had one in my possession; but I have given it to a friend for his museum, so that I cannot show it to you.”

“You interest me extremely,” said Mr. Stanley, “about your brave ancestors, whether descended from the ancient people of the land, or from the invaders; but these have been so long established here, that they also may justly claim the name of Irish.”

“And they do claim it,” said Mr. Desmond, “though in perfect ignorance of their Anglican descent.”

“I presume,” said Mr. Stanley, “that time has worn away all remains of antipathy between the original and the foreign Irish.”

“In some parts of the country it has, but not among all: for instance, the dislike of the real Irish for the Anglo-Norman settlers, particularly the Desmonds, often revived from time to time during the ages that have passed since their first warfare. A small thing serves to light the embers of national prejudice.”

“My dear papa,” said Evelyn, interrupting him and forgetting her ill-humour, “I did not know that your family was so old, and that your name was one of such renown. I am sorry that I have not that noble name: though perhaps it is not equal to O’Brien. But why, papa, have you made no effort to recover your possessions? why not fight, like your brave ancestors, for your own property as well as for the liberty of our country?”

“Gently, gently, Evelyn! Had I lived two hundred years ago, I should perhaps, like many other ‘brave’ men, have been induced to endeavour to obtain what I might then, perhaps, have imagined freedom for Ireland: but that time has

passed. As to the Desmond possessions, we have sufficient, and are contented, though insignificant. It would be useless, as well as wicked, to endeavour to regain by force that which has long since passed into other hands."

"Oh! papa, I feel my heart swell at the thoughts of all that we, who are still so powerful, may do for our country."

"Yes, you may acquire some influence hereafter, and then, it certainly ought to be warmly exerted for your country; but *ONLY* by promoting obedience to the laws, for loyalty is the best preservative of liberty. Try to encourage your countrymen to improve by the example of the industrious English, to whom we ought to feel united as sisters, and who are necessarily so connected with us that, even were I so inclined, it would be absurd now to attempt to separate from them."

"But would it not be noble for you—oh, yes! for you, papa, the descendant of the great Desmond—to recover your power and influence, to establish freedom, and to claim your kingdom? and then *I* would——."

"No, Evelyn, my dear child, the time is now come when the descendants of every ancient house are called upon to prove their high blood by exercising their influence in the instruction of the people in the arts of peace, and in promoting obedience to the laws; believe me, disobedience to the laws is not freedom."

"But our country! I am determined to make that the first object of my life."

"Very well, my dear, but do not forget that discontent will not produce comfort; and that, moreover, being a female must preclude you from all Quixotte-like attempts. You must be content to establish your sovereignty in the hearts of your dependants."

"I shall find that very difficult, I fear," said Evelyn, her spirit sinking as her excitement was damped; "how am I to win their affection, or to establish my influence? They will despise me as a woman. I know and feel that I ought to do much—but where and how to begin!"

"Do not be in haste to begin anything yet," said Mrs. Desmond; "take a little time to consider, and in the mean while yield kindly to our wish. Come and pay a visit to your father

and to me. You cannot doubt that we shall be glad to have you at Clonallen. Come to your sister Mabel, who longs to know and love you. Though you are not to reside with us, yet we may be like one family in affection and union of interests. Come to us, and learn from your father's example and advice how to win the hearts of your people."

Evelyn's heart was not as obstinate as her will. Though half an hour before she would have been deaf to Mrs. Desmond's kindness, her gentle urgency could no longer be resisted. Evelyn consented; and her father, embracing her, exclaimed with more than his usual warmth of manner, "Now I shall have the pleasure of seeing all my children around me! and Mr. Stanley shall judge whether a visit to me—to us—can be mischievous to you, or an infringement of any regulation of your grandfather's. I shall be glad, too, that before the arrival of Mrs. Manvers you should make acquaintance with your brother and sister."

Evelyn felt satisfied with herself, and all was *couleur de rose*. The remainder of the day was devoted to boating across the lake and walking among the woods on the opposite bank. Her spirits rose, in proportion as the mist of prejudice gave way, and her natural gaiety, which had been repressed for some time, began to revive.

At night Jane was delighted to find Evelyn once more like herself; and when she learned that her young lady was going to Clonallen House on Monday, she exclaimed, "Oh, thank Heaven you are going among decent people, and not to mope by yourself here!—it would break your young spirit; and I assure you, Miss Evelyn, I hear a mighty great account of Mrs. Desmond—she is loved by all the country round."

CHAPTER X.

The ancient Parish Church — Evelyn's Pew — The venerable Pastor — His Sermon on the Character of David—His Advice about Schools.

THE next day being Sunday, Evelyn, accompanied by her guests, went for the first time to her parish-church, which was about three miles from Cromdarragh Castle.

The Rector, Mr. Elton, was an excellent old gentleman, whose society would have been of infinite advantage to her ; but he was going abroad for some months, in order to repair the health worn out by his zealous and long-continued exertions.

Mr. Desmond, at the same time that he wished to make his daughter known to his old friend Mr. Elton, and to lay a foundation for a further acquaintance which would be so desirable for her, was anxious that Mr. Stanley should know what a friend and guide his ward would have in her pastor.

The church was of ancient date, part of a venerable abbey ; one of the few structures of early times which have been preserved in sufficient repair to be used in public worship. There was much there to interest Evelyn—monuments to many of her ancestors ; her own pew rising aristocratically above the others, and distinguished by the family coat-of-arms carved in oak, placed conspicuously over the fireplace which occupied one end, while in front there was a long narrow pew for the domestics of the family.

Evelyn was surprised at the state in which she seemed to sit ; but much more delighted with the church, which, though rude and wholly without ornament, appeared beautiful to her from its antiquity. The consciousness of her own importance, raised in every sense above the congregation, which was small, but decent and attentive, rendered it difficult at first to command her wandering thoughts and direct them to the one purpose of assembling there—to hear the word of God, and offer up with humility prayer and praise to Him. But when

the venerable pastor began to read, his sweet and solemn voice seemed to penetrate her heart; all other thoughts were put aside, and she felt that his piety drew forth hers, and made her join fervently in the prayers. His sermon was on the character of David, and he gave the three first verses of the 63rd Psalm as his text. "The effusions," he said, "of one who wished to know God; but who, being amongst the wicked and worldly, found it difficult to escape from their snares—from the dry and barren land—to search for the Lord and to behold his power and glory.

"David," he said, "was considered as a type of Christ in his obedience, his humiliation, his devotedness to God; on the other hand, he may be viewed as a distinct type also of mankind, for his character represented truly our imperfection and inconsistency, our evil nature and proneness to sin, even along with obedience to God—a type as it might perhaps be said of the union of the divine and human nature in Christ." And then following him through the various changes of his life, he pointed to the improvement in David's heart produced by faith—applying to mankind in general the same view of the effect of faith on the human character, and concluding by an impressive address to his congregation, urging each to apply all that had been said of David's uncertain character to themselves, with an humble desire for amendment. "An humble soul," said he, "has a high esteem for his Redeemer and a low esteem for himself; because humility is both the fruit of faith and the companion of faith."

The last words made a deep impression on Evelyn; she felt as if they were intended for herself alone; for she well knew how often pride destroyed the good impulses of her heart, and was conscious how much her mind had been disturbed that very morning as she sat in her grand pew, by the pride and vanity produced by her new situation in life.

When her father presented her to Mr. Elton after the service was over, she felt inclined to lay open to him the various thoughts which had engrossed her mind during his affecting discourse, and to acknowledge how much it applied to herself; but she was withheld by that diffidence of expressing one's feelings which is so often combined with a proud disposition.

Mr. Elton's manner towards her was parental, and so kind that she would in a short time have felt at ease with him. He remembered well having baptized Evelyn, his eyes overflowing as he spoke of her mother, who had been partly educated by him; and he much regretted that his ill health, which had hitherto prevented him from visiting his young friend (as he hoped he might call her), now forced him away at the very time when it would have been so interesting to him to have become well acquainted with the granddaughter of his highly regarded friend Sir Connor O'Brien, and the representative of that ancient family. This touched the most sensitive chord of Evelyn's heart, and she felt at once that she ought to value Mr. Elton as an old friend. He showed her his Sunday-school and village library, and detailed with lively interest some of his exertions for the education and improvement of the people around him. Those who had been amongst the first pupils at his school were now distinguished for their industry and good conduct, and remarkable as having kept out of all political disturbances. But at present, alas! his ill health obliged him to withdraw for a time from all the duties and occupations which had been the object of his life; and his grief at this change was increased by the fear that the visitors of the school might not be as careful, or feel the same interest as himself in the conduct of the children. Evelyn regretted that her distance from the school prevented her from taking any share in the labours of the visitors, but assured him she would have a school of her own.

"Let me hope then, my dear young lady, that it will be something more than a nominal school; and, though you condescend to superintend and give it your attention, that you will secure its success by employing a teacher on whom you can depend. Few ladies have it in their power to attend constantly at their schools; and there is nothing more injurious to those poor children than the irregular mode of teaching which is the consequence. And I have sometimes found, I am sorry to say, that, when young ladies undertake to instruct a class, they are themselves not always sufficiently informed to be of as much use as might be hoped from those who had been apparently well educated themselves."

Evelyn asked Mr. Elton if any books were read in his school besides the Scriptures.

"Except to those children who can read with ease," replied he, "I never give the Bible. There are indeed some short lessons in Scripture, and selections suited to them, which they all learn; and when once able to read well they are allowed to have the Bible as a reward; then they read it eagerly. Much that is painful on that subject would never have taken place but for the injudicious zeal that urged constant instruction in the sacred book only."

"Then you do allow them to read other books also, I perceive?" said Evelyn.

"Yes, certainly," said Mr. Elton, "and I encourage their love of reading by having a lending library attached to the school. There are several collections published by our Education Societies, which give useful knowledge on various subjects; there are also some little tales adapted to the children of the peasantry. If such books are permitted to be read at the schools they will lead to something higher."

"Does not that admit of some doubt?" said Mr. Stanley.

"Perhaps it may so appear," said Mr. Elton; "but to confirm the truth of my assertion, I must tell you a circumstance which occurred in London. An excellent clergyman, being appointed to the curacy of one of the most disorderly and populous parishes of that city, where the lower orders usually spent their sabbaths in idleness, and never attended public worship, soon established a lending library for his parishioners; and though they had never thought of reading till then, he found in a short time that they not only were glad to borrow the books, but that they showed good taste in the selection, for none were so much read as 'Popular Tales' and all the other beautiful tales by the same well-known author. Invariably those families in which they were most read were brought, from vice and neglect of the sabbath, to orderly conduct and regular attendance on public worship, and even led to read the Bible with diligence and advantage. This anecdote I know from the mother of that good clergyman; and I think that, in this country particularly, you will find how much may be done by giving moral instruction and habits of

order and obedience; in many cases it is impossible to do more. But even that much, if done with steadiness and moderation, will greatly civilize the people and increase their comfort."

"Do you think, Mr. Elton, that the people are anxious for education?" said Evelyn hesitatingly.

"Undoubtedly," replied he, "they prize it highly, and will often undergo much fatigue and difficulty in order to procure it."

"That is very encouraging," said Evelyn: "I am glad to see that my efforts will not be thrown away."

"Yes; it would be disheartening," said Mr. Elton, "to think our own people less desirous of education than the uncivilized inhabitants of the South Sea Islands, of whom I heard a pleasing anecdote lately, which was related by Mr. Pritchard the missionary. At the time he was in the island of Rarotonga, there was such a large attendance of the native children at the Missionary school, that the supply of slates and pencils failed; but the ingenuity of the little boys soon provided a substitute. Among the hills they had observed a slaty kind of stone, which they could split into thin pieces; and, procuring from the shore a lump of coral, they rubbed the one on the other till they made the face of the stone quite smooth, and then they stained it of a dark colour in order to show writing more distinctly. Having thus provided themselves with slates from the hills, they had recourse to the sea for pencils; the numerous spines of the sea-egg, a species of *Echinus*, answering the purpose perfectly well."

Evelyn listened with reverence and deep interest to all Mr. Elton said. She was charmed with the anecdote of the little South Sea Islanders; and enjoyed Mr. Elton's conversation so much that she would gladly have prolonged her visit had not Mr. Desmond reminded her of the impropriety of intruding on Mr. Elton's precious time, especially on Sunday. She took leave of him with a kindness very gratifying to him, and he gave her his blessing in a most impressive and touching manner.

In their drive home Mr. Stanley warmly expressed his approbation of Mr. Elton's sentiments, and his satisfaction that Evelyn had such a parish minister.

CHAPTER XI.

Drive to Clonallen — Bog — Turf Fuel — The pretty Hamlet — Neatness and Comfort near Clonallen—Arrival there—Mabel.

THE distance between Cromdarragh Castle and Clonallen was only fifteen miles ; but hill and bog made the journey tedious. Few places in that direction had much wood to boast of ; and after the road turned off from Evelyn's well-planted demesne, the country appeared to her eyes—accustomed to the rich woods and hedgerows of England—truly bare and desolate. Mr. Stanley, too, was disappointed at the sudden change to a bleak country, for the view of the hills and moors, among which the road wound, was diversified only by a few fields of corn or potatoes, which showed, indeed, that the inhabitants of those scattered hamlets were not deficient in industry, though sadly in want of the means of bringing their waste land into cultivation.

As they passed these miserable dwellings Evelyn felt what a pleasure it would be to relieve their distressed inhabitants : her first impulse would have been to stop, and at the moment to give assistance largely to each. It was then, however, impossible ; but the cheerful and goodnatured appearance of those poor people in the midst of penury made a deep impression on her mind, and for some time her thoughts were so much occupied in devising plans for improving the state of the poor cottagers, that she paid little attention to the conversation of the rest of the party.

But at length the appearance of the country changed : no longer on a wide road among bare hills, they were now, Evelyn perceived, on a sort of raised-up causeway, with what appeared like a deep gulf of water on each side, while nothing was to be seen around but a wide waste of dark brown bog, partly covered with moss and heath and small stacks of turf.

Mr. Stanley expressed some surprise at the extent of the bog and at its general appearance: in reply to his inquiries Mr. Desmond told him it was the same as what is called peat-moss in many parts of England, or simply moss in the north of England; and Evelyn, recollecting her surprise when she first observed some in her journey to Cromdarragh, and heard that such an odd-looking substance could be used as fuel, said she still thought it must make very bad fires.

"Bad fires, indeed, I should think!" said Mr. Stanley; "how wet and dull they must be!"

"Wet as it appears when first cut out of the bog," said Mr. Desmond, "it becomes very dry when spread in the air for some time, and is then brought home and piled in large stacks in our farm-yards—a store for winter fires—and very comfortable we find them."

"What a very nasty odd sort of fire they must make; just like wet wood!" said Evelyn.

"No, I assure you," said Mrs. Desmond, "if the turf be well saved and kept dry, it makes a most delightful, bright, hot, cheerful fire; and so far from being nasty, as you suppose, it is much cleaner than coal. It forms a much larger quantity of ashes; and though they are so light as to fly about the room sometimes, yet they do not soil what they touch. It has only one fault, that of burning too quickly, and therefore requiring constant attention."

"I should feel that as a serious objection to it," said Mr. Stanley; "it is so troublesome to interrupt one's studies and pursuits even to stir the fire. No wonder the Irish are so vivacious! They never can give their whole attention to any object, however important, for half at least of their thoughts must be occupied by the perpetual necessity of putting on fresh fuel."

"Very good!" said Mr. Desmond, laughing: "I wish, however, that you would try at my house the possibility of studying beside a good turf-fire next winter."

"Oh, papa!" said Evelyn, "perhaps it might enliven Mr. Driver to enjoy a few cold nights beside a turf-fire; he requires it more than Mr. Stanley, whom we should like to have all the

winter for our own sakes. How droll poor stiff Mr. Driver would look at such a fire! He would never understand it; and I am sure it would disturb his calculations and set him all wrong: how charming that would be!"

"But to return to our subject," said Mr. Stanley, looking grave at Evelyn's little bit of malice towards Mr. Driver; "you seem to have great abundance of this fuel, whether good or bad; is it equally plentiful in all parts of Ireland?"

"I am sorry," replied Mr. Desmond, "to say that there are large districts of our island totally without bog; and there the distress of the poor for so important an article of comfort is extreme. Coal, whether procured from our own coal-mines or brought from England, is too expensive for the poor, though perhaps more economical than turf for the rich, who can afford to pay a high price at once for an article that repays them by its being much more slowly consumed than turf."

"We must consider their distress as some excuse, then, for cutting and breaking trees and hedges, as I have heard they do," said Mr. Stanley.

"I have often wished," said Mr. Desmond, "that country gentlemen would thin their plantations regularly, for the express purpose of providing fuel for the poorer peasantry; it would be advantageous to the trees, and would be an inducement to the people to protect our plantations instead of destroying them."

"But would not that regular gift at once diminish their industry, and be, after a short time, considered as their right?"

"Certainly, if it was a gift; but I would sell the wood at a moderate price, except in cases of distress," replied Mr. Desmond.

"I do not recollect seeing any bogs, or even hearing of them, in England," said Evelyn.

"There are some extensive bogs in Lancashire and the northern counties, and also in Huntingdonshire, from whence peat for fuel is brought in small quantities to London. In many places they have been brought into cultivation, and now amply repay the expense of reclaiming them."

"I wish that could be done in Ireland," said Mr. Stanley;

"how advantageous would it be to have all this extent of bog, as you call it, rendered capable of producing food!"

"There have been several very successful instances in Ireland of bogs reclaimed within these few years; but the result depends very much on the nature of the bog and its situation."

"Well, I know if I find that I have any bog I am determined that it shall be reclaimed and cultivated, that it may produce plenty of food for my people," exclaimed Evelyn.

"That may be a desirable object," said Mrs. Desmond; "yet you must remember that fuel is as essential as food, and that all such improvements, if too precipitate, may become mischievous."

"Oh! as to that, I will buy coals for all the poor on my land till the produce of their reclaimed bogs makes them rich enough to purchase it for themselves. Look at those miserable creatures whom I have been for some time watching, and at those wretched little ponies with panniers of turf on their backs; we have passed several. I am sure such a pittance of fuel is hardly earned."

"I do not think that degree of labour can be called very hard, in fine weather at least," said Mrs. Desmond: "in soft wet ground a little pony answers better than a horse and cart. Sometimes, indeed," she added, "the love of procrastination does make it hard work; for if the season has become wet before they begin, it is with the utmost difficulty, and often with hazard to themselves, that they can bring away the turf, as the wetness of the bog renders it nearly impossible. The landlord might often give material assistance to his cottagers by attending to the bog-roads, and by insisting on the turf being cut and saved early, so as to be ready to carry away in good time."

"You spoke of cultivating all your bogs, Evelyn; but before you turn them into potato-fields," said Mr. Desmond, "pray recollect that this sort of fuel is a treasure that we possess independently of wind and sea, and of all expensive mining operations. If permitted by their employers to cut their turf early, the poor may, by a little exertion, be secure in these boggy regions of having firing, the expense of which

is less in proportion to them than to the rich, because they give their own labour towards obtaining it. When you visit your cottagers you will see what comfortable fires they have for boiling their potatoes—and that most of them are sensible of the comfort.”

“I am sure it will be delightful to see them at ease and happy,” said Evelyn; “but I wish, at all events, you would tell me what bog is, for it is an extraordinary-looking substance?”

“The decay of trees and plants in stagnant water—fibres, and leaves, and creeping roots, all matted together, contribute chiefly to its formation,” replied Mr. Desmond.

“I should like to get out of the carriage and examine it—may I, papa?”

“So should I,” said Mr. Stanley; “I am quite curious to know more about it.”

“We can examine our own bog at Clonallen better, and more at leisure,” said Mr. Desmond: “some fine morning we can take a ramble over it, which will be more satisfactory, as we should have scarcely time now to look at it attentively.”

After they had driven through bog for some miles the road turned off, leading through fertile valleys, which were better cultivated, and the peasantry appeared more comfortable. At length Mr. Stanley’s attention was attracted by a neat little hamlet, where the cottages were furnished with good chimneys and windows, and well roofed; very simple and unpretending in appearance, but supplied with well-fenced and well-filled gardens of vegetables; while a rose-tree, or honeysuckle, or sweetbrier against the houses, marked some advance towards taste and comfort. Near the hamlet were well-protected plantations, and on the hills around a few scattered cottages sheltered by trees or bushes added to the beauty and interest of the scene.

Mr. Stanley, who had been silent for some time, but evidently intent on all he saw, at last exclaimed,

“Well, Ireland really has its pretty spots! How beautiful it would everywhere appear if all proprietors took as good care of their property as the owner of this nice comfortable-

looking hamlet, who seems to have worked miracles in making the people keep their houses in such neat order. He must be a good landlord and a man of taste." Just then a sudden turn of the road gave him a view of a gentleman-like seat, prettily situated.

"I suppose the proprietor resides there—do you know him?"

"Yes," said Mr. Desmond, smiling. In a few minutes the carriage turned into a pretty simple gateway, which with Irish hospitality stood open; and Mr. Stanley then discovered that they had actually arrived at Clonallen, and that Mr. Desmond was himself the good proprietor he had been praising. A short avenue through an oak wood, along the edge of a glen, brought them to the house, where on the steps the children stood to welcome their father and mother.

Evelyn's heart beat quickly, and her cheeks were flushed, at the idea of seeing a brother and sister. She silently pressed her father's hand;—she had never known what it was to have a sister, and had thought with delight of the meeting; yet now a cloud seemed to pass over her mind.

She had jumped hastily out of the carriage, and was rushing on, when, stopping suddenly, she hung back; the idea that Mabel could not love her crossed her mind. Fixing her eyes on the ground, she scarcely moved, when, after an affectionate embrace and welcome from her father and Mrs. Desmond, he would have led her on. But this mixed sentiment of pride and diffidence did not last long; she felt a gentle arm thrown affectionately round her neck, and a kiss on her cheek, which forced her to look up. The prettiest, brightest face, all radiant with pleasure at seeing her, sweet blue eyes full of kindness, and glowing cheeks, appeared before her and were irresistible: she threw herself on Mabel's neck, exclaiming, "Are you my sister? will you love me?"

"Yes, to be sure I shall love you! Mamma wrote to me that she was certain we should love each other, and so we shall, dear sister Evelyn. Only I am afraid you will think me too young—too much a child to be your companion."

"Oh no!" exclaimed Evelyn, kissing her again; "I am accustomed to children, and can play with them very happily."

Mrs. Desmond was amused at Evelyn's answer to her sister, but made no remark, knowing well that a few days would prove that Mabel was capable of more than childish play. It was late, and soon after their arrival the dressing-bell rang. Mrs. Desmond, taking Evelyn up stairs, led her into a nice little bedroom, which looked upon some flower-beds in a bank sloping down to a rapid brook which reflected the evening sun and completed the beauty of the scene. Embracing her affectionately, Mrs. Desmond again expressed her gratification at Evelyn's visit, assuring her that from henceforth that room was to be considered hers, and that at all times she would be really welcome there. Evelyn was surprised at the neatness of this room and the elegance of its furniture, and involuntarily exclaimed, when she was alone, "Well! I never expected to see anything so nice here! Even Violet Stanley's apartment is not equal to this; and yet she imagined everything in Ireland was mean and uncomfortable!"

In a short time, Mabel tapping gently at the door, asked if Evelyn required assistance,—the last bell had rung, and dinner was coming up.

"Come in, dear Mabel: yes, you can help me very much. I was so delighted with this room and the view of the garden, and everything, that I have only just begun to dress. Thank you, thank you! how expert you are! Now that my frock is fastened I hope to get down in time."

"Come then, let us run quickly down stairs, for both papa and mamma like that we should be in the library before dinner is announced," said Mabel.

"So did poor grandpapa; he always tried to make me punctual," said Evelyn, as she followed the swiftfooted Mabel, just reaching the door at the last moment.

Evelyn had had many mistaken ideas about her father's house; amongst others, she had imagined that, because he had a narrow income, everything must necessarily be shabby and uncomfortable. To inexperienced youth a small income and want of comfort often appear to be one and the same; but they are not; for regularity and neatness make the most homely things comfortable. Nicety of adaptation and skilful arrangement will almost always compensate for the want of

expensive luxuries ; and so judiciously were those principles combined here that, to Evelyn's surprise, there was no appearance of poverty. Everything was in the same style to which she had been accustomed, and she could not perceive the contrast she had expected between the furniture of Clonallen House and that of her own grand castle. Her next imagination was, that as everything was so orderly everybody must be very stiff and grave and formal ; but, on the contrary, the conversation which Mr. and Mrs. Desmond promoted was lively and animated ; and the children were far more gay and amusing than the little Stanleys, the only set of children of whom she had, in her short experience, known much. Her brother was a sensible, dark-eyed, intelligent boy, of a more serious countenance than Mabel, but very lively when excited. Mrs. Desmond appeared to be the companion as well as the parent, and listened with the utmost interest to their little histories of their amusements and walks and occupations during the few days she had been absent.

Evelyn went in the evening with Mabel and her brother to their own gardens, their favourite walks, and a bower fragrant with honeysuckle, and was so happy along with them that she actually forgot to consider her sister as a child, though she still called her " little Mabel."

Notwithstanding her exaggerated ideas of her own importance, she appeared very pleasing in her new position. Her father and Mr. Stanley were gratified at seeing that she not only was kind to her brother and sister, but attentive, if not affectionate, in her behaviour to Mrs. Desmond, whose manner so dignified, yet so lively and gracious, had already much diminished her horror of a stepmother.

CHAPTER XII.

Mabel's Lessons—The Rose and its Varieties — History of the Double Rose — Morning Prayers — Visit to the Holy Well — Votive Offerings—Round Tower—Ancient Rath—Folkmoat—Tynewald Mount.

EARLY the next morning Mabel tapped at Evelyn's door to offer assistance, and to invite her to walk for half an hour before the bell summoned the family to prayers. "Come in, dear little Mabel. No, thank you, my dear, I can fasten this frock myself. An early walk, you say; yes, very pleasant indeed! but can you leave your lessons now?"

"I generally read at an earlier hour than this; and as to lessons, I cannot say I have any now. Mamma says I am no longer a child, and therefore——"

"No longer a child!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"And therefore," continued Mabel, unmindful of the interruption, "she says, learning should be a voluntary employment; and indeed it is so, for I am very anxious to acquire knowledge."

"So am I: there are many things I wish to learn."

"Perhaps," said Mabel, "we might learn something together."

"Together!" Evelyn repeated after her. "Oh yes, it would be very nice if we could; but I want to get beyond what children learn, and advance to what grown-up people know."

"What sort of things do you mean?" Mabel asked.

"Oh, I mean geology, algebra, and German and Latin, and such things, which are of course too difficult for children."

"I have not found them very difficult," said Mabel, blushing modestly; "but then papa and mamma teach so well and patiently, and explain so cleverly, that it assists me very much."

"But you do not mean that you have learned all that I mentioned? I did not think that I—I imagined that, as you are so much younger, you could not have got beyond me!" exclaimed Evelyn, with an air of mortification.

"Being always with papa helped to bring me on. But, come, do not sigh, dear Evelyn; I am sure there is much that you do know better than me. Let us go out to my garden before the morning grows too hot."

There again Evelyn found her knowledge was surpassed by that of her *little* sister, for, when Evelyn expressed her surprise at seeing different kinds of roses on the same tree, Mabel answered that she had budded them herself; to the astonishment of Evelyn, who had never heard of a lady attempting such a thing.

"How delightfully the air is perfumed by all these roses!" exclaimed Evelyn: "I see you have the damask and the quatre-saisons, which are the sweetest of all. But I wish you had some of those which grow in such profusion on the rocky coast of Norway; the delicious fragrance of which is wafted to vessels far out at sea—at least so I have read."

"I have been told that in various parts of the world even wild roses are found which have both beauty and fragrance," said Mabel. "There is a species which grows on the shores of Jersey which is uncommonly fragrant; and a lady who had spent many winters in the Bermuda Islands described a very sweet one to me, which she found there also, on the sands—the same perhaps as that which is described as scenting the air in Canada. Do you recollect? It was mentioned in that nice account of Canada published in the 'Library of Entertaining Knowledge;' but the author does not tell the species. Mamma says she has heard that it is single, and somewhat like the wild roses of this country."

"I do not think I have ever heard of a native African rose," said Evelyn, "though we have many Indian, European, and American."

"It seems doubtful," said Mabel. "Mamma inquired from a friend who had passed some time in West Africa in regard to native roses; her answer was, that she had never seen or

heard of indigenous roses in the region of Ashantee, where she had resided ; and that, although much had been stated of the fragrant roses of El Faioum, on which the bees of Egypt love to feast, and the giraffe to browse, it is supposed by some that whatever roses are found in Egypt and Nubia must have been introduced from India ; but the same friend added that it was a disputed point,—two or three species having been found, it is said, at Tunis.”

“ I did not know that the giraffe was so fond of flowers,” said Evelyn.

“ Oh yes, very fond. The same person told mamma that, when she went to see the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, the giraffe exhibited there, instantly perceiving a bunch of roses she held in her hand, stretched his long neck over her head and ate them up. Besides, Mr. Wilde says, in his book, that, when the caravan entered the city of Cairo, some of the giraffes that had been brought by it stretched up their heads to the windows as they passed and devoured the bouquets of the ladies, who were looking at its arrival.”

“ How excessively interesting to hear travellers tell what they have seen ! ” said Evelyn ; “ still better than reading their accounts. As to these roses which you have collected, there is so little apparent difference between several of them that it must be difficult to distinguish their varieties. What are the chief points to observe in examining them ? ”

“ Papa told me,” replied Mabel, “ that the shape of the receptacle is one very marked distinction ; but the most important is the soft down of the branches and little flower-stalks, and the tube of the calyx ; their having that down, or being bare, is a certain mark,—the down of the leaves is of no importance. However, he says that, though much stress has been laid by botanists on this particular of the down, a careful observer may often trace the different species running into one another.”

“ Come, Mabel ; come, sisters,” cried Gerald, running towards them ; “ the bell will soon ring ; you had better be near the house.”

“ I do not know,” said Evelyn, as they walked home,

"whether roses are ever found anywhere naturally full and double, or if they are only made so by culture."

"I am not sure;—I imagine they are increased by removal into a rich soil," replied Mabel.

"Oh!" said Gerald, "do not you recollect, Mabel, what papa read to us one day out of Herodotus? In the history of the three brothers, who in flying from Argos took refuge in Macedonia, one of them, named Perdiccas, was so clever that the king was afraid of him, so they retired you know to a place near the garden of Midas, and there they found roses of sixty petals and of most charming odour, growing naturally without cultivation. From this province these three brothers extended their dominion; and Perdiccas was, you know, the ancestor of Alexander the Great."

"That is going very far back for a history of double or single roses," said Evelyn.

"Yes, it seems so; but I must still add, that in a note to that anecdote it is said, the delightful hundred-leaved rose is really found even now in the neighbourhood of the city of Philippi."

"But that is not the whole note," said Mabel, laughing; "for they tell us afterwards that those roses are not natives of Philippi, but are found on Mount Taygetus, and *when transplanted* into the good soil near Philippi they become much larger, and then it was that the number of petals increased to sixty. However, that is nothing to the roses in the royal gardens of Paris, some of which consist of three hundred petals."

"At all events," said Evelyn, "I shall collect every kind of that sweetest of all flowers, and I must——." She was interrupted here by her father, who met them, and, kissing both, inquired what was the sweetest of flowers of which Evelyn had spoken.

"The rose, of which I intend to have a delicious bank like Mabel's, but containing every kind in the world."

"They are not equally fragrant in all parts of the world," said Mr. Desmond. "You know the ever-blowing rose, beautiful and ornamental as it is, is rather deficient in that respect. In Madeira that rose is so common, that the Por-

tuguese express their contempt of it by calling it *Rosa Ingleza*—applying the name of *Rosa Portuguesa* to the more fragrant and rarer sorts, and in particular to our own damask rose.”

The party had now reached the house, and, every one being assembled, Mr. Desmond read a chapter of the Bible, on which he gave a short, clear, explanatory comment; and then read prayers with that devotion which is the more impressive when coming from an affectionate father and kind master.

Breakfast did not last very long, for it was decided that they should all go to see the ruins of a church and Round Tower several miles off, and very soon after breakfast they set out. The carriage held four within and two on the back seat. Evelyn concluded the children would like to sit together there; but she found that they were always glad when some of the elder part of the company changed with them; for they enjoyed very much, she observed, listening to the conversation, showing such intelligence and readiness when spoken to, and seeming so gratified at being noticed, that she could not avoid making a secret comparison between them and the little Stanleys, who liked to keep away from those who were older than themselves, “because what they talked about was, as they said, so dull!”

A few miles from Clonallen House they came to a pretty little spot, where, surrounded by hills, there was a small tarn, or mountain lake. On one side a green hill rose abruptly to a considerable height, on the declivity of which they observed a well, overhung by an ancient willow; it was a picturesque little spot, and revered by the people, Mr. Desmond said, as a holy well. As Mr. Stanley wished to look at it, the carriage was stopped, and all the party walked to it. When near, they perceived that on every branch of the willow—large or small—were fastened little scraps of rags, and paper, and various things, which Mr. Desmond said were intended as votive offerings; but adding, that the custom was now dying away as the people became more educated.

“It is a curious fact,” said Mr. Stanley, “that this custom prevails in many different parts of the world.”

"Oh! yes," said Gerald, interrupting him. "Do you not recollect, Mabel, that papa once described to us the quantity of scraps of every sort of thing which were hung about the well at Holywell, in Wales—just like this?"

"I was going," continued Mr. Stanley, "to mention a more remote instance. In the valley of the Rio Negro, in South America, there is a famous tree, which the natives reverence as the altar of their deity, Wallshen. Darwin saw it in winter only when it had no leaves, but in their place were innumerable little offerings suspended to the twigs, such as meat and bread, cigars, bits of cloth, &c.; those who had nothing better to offer pulled a thread out of their poncho, and tied it to a branch. That tree is quite a landmark, and, when seen from a considerable distance, the natives offer their adorations by loud shouts."

"In that respect there is a manifest difference," said Mrs. Desmond; "for I do not think the people here express their devotion with shouts."

"Indeed, I must confess," added Mr. Stanley, "that these offerings appear to be also Oriental; so that this time at least, Mr. Desmond, you and I may agree. An instance of it is mentioned in Moorcroft's entertaining travels, at Shingo, in Ladak, on the borders of Thibet. He ascended by rude steps to a sacred cairn, on which was a small temple, and a statue of the deity Chamba. The cairn was decorated with bits of cloth and scraps of rags, just like this willow-tree."

"A remarkable circumstance," said Mrs. Desmond, "which confirms my idea that, whatever resemblances we trace between this country and the East, they are almost constantly found to be in some way connected with religious worship."

"I was not aware of that," said Mr. Stanley: "what then do you infer?"

"I will not venture now into any lengthy discussion of the subject," replied Mrs. Desmond, "farther than to remark that in every age nations have been found to adhere so steadfastly to the exterior ceremonies of their religion, or at least are so unwilling to part with them, that, in order to promote their conversion, some have considered it expedient—though I think mistakenly—to allow them to combine some

of their forms, even the observance of their sacred days, with the rites of the religion to be adopted; and I think this remark will be found applicable to the various sects of the eastern world, as well as to those of Europe."

Just then the Round Tower and the ruin beside it appeared in sight, and Mr. Stanley was delighted with the grandeur and peculiar appearance of the former, rising ninety feet in height, and standing alone on a rock. Its situation also was truly picturesque, and its being surrounded by wild rocky hills of still greater height seemed to prove that it could never have been intended for a watch-tower. He was much interested, and, borrowing a ladder from the man who kept the key of it, ascended to the door, which was fifteen feet above the ground, and examined it with the practised eye of an antiquary.

"I cannot deny," said he, "that there is some resemblance between this and the towers which travellers describe in the East. Yet it is not easy to perceive for what purpose they can have been used here. I have heard it said that they were built by the Danes,—"

"But I have heard grandpapa say that they were here long before the invasion of the Danes," said Evelyn, interrupting him.

"I must allow," continued Mr. Stanley, "that I have not seen in books relating to the countries of the Nordmen any mention of the existence there of such buildings. It is, indeed, a most interesting subject of inquiry; but as yet the results have been unsatisfactory, because we have no facts on which to rest one opinion more than another—no certainty."

"We must, therefore, have recourse to coincidence and to collateral evidence," replied Mr. Desmond, "in trying to prove anything respecting these buildings."

"But," said Mr. Stanley, "if they are always found adjacent to former places of worship, why not conclude, as I have heard it suggested, that they were intended as belfries to summon the congregation?"

"As several of these Round Towers have no windows in the top, and therefore no sufficient means of emitting sound, I think that could not have been their purpose," replied

Mr. Desmond. "Besides, in many instances, the churches adjoining Round Towers have evidently had their own belfries forming a regular part of the building; and there are a few of those Round Towers near which no remains of a church have been discovered. It is observable, too, that the style of building in the churches near which they have been found is usually so different and inferior to that of the tower, as to show that they must have been erected in different ages."

"The masonwork of the towers is superior then to that of your churches?"

"Yes, in most instances certainly," said Mr. Desmond, "the towers were far more carefully built; for they, and the stone-roofed cells often found near them, have outlasted their companion churches, and indeed the very manner of their masonry shows that the work was done by different hands. According to my ideas, the church was attracted to the tower already there, which, having belonged to some more ancient mode of worship, made the later religion more palatable to the people by being connected with it in some degree. This place is one instance of what Mrs. Desmond alluded to half an hour ago."

"That does appear to be the case in Italy, too, I confess," said Mr. Stanley. "Blunt, in his very interesting book on the vestiges of heathen worship, has plainly shown that heathen customs, and temples, and days, have been frequently transferred by the early preachers of Christianity into Christian ceremonies, and into places now consecrated to holy purposes."

"It is remarkable," said Mr. Desmond, "that in those countries of Europe which were christianised as early at least as Ireland, there are no vestiges of round towers such as ours. They are evidently memorials of ages before the Christian era; remote times, indeed, but of which some of the remains are beautifully perfect."

During this conversation Evelyn, who felt much interest in the subject, listened very attentively, and was going to ask one or two questions about these remarkable buildings so peculiar to her own country, when, to her disappointment, the subject changed, for the party sat down on a green knoll under

a spreading thorn-tree, to refresh themselves with the contents of a little basket which they had brought with them; and, on examining their rustic seat, they found they were sitting on the slope of one of those ancient tumuli or *raths* that are so common in Ireland. Evelyn observed how curiously marked the stems of the old thorn-bushes appeared, as if they had been twisted. Her father told her that in ancient times there was always a wattled fence of living thorns round the villages, which stood on the summits of those large raths; and he showed her that these old thorns, beside which they were now seated, were evidently the remains of the old wattling of many hundred years ago—adding, that such wattled villages are to this day to be seen in the Caucasus.

Evelyn looked significantly to Mr. Stanley, who allowed it was a remarkable coincidence. "But," said he, "if we could trace the early customs of every country, I think we should find that they were similar at a corresponding stage of civilisation."

"I wish," said Evelyn, "that my father, or some one as well qualified for it, would publish an account of the early civilisation of Ireland, and of its progress, and the cause of its decay, but omitting all the tiresome wars and feuds among the different kingdoms."

"A good idea, if you could find authentic records of it," said Mr. Stanley, laughing.

"I have no doubt that we could," said Evelyn, haughtily.

In walking about they saw a party of children seated in a circle under some of the aged thorns which stood round the rath, apparently so much occupied as not to be sensible of their approach. Curious to see what play they were engaged in, Mr. Stanley hastened towards them, and discovered, to his surprise, that, instead of playing at *hunt the slipper* as he imagined, or some other childish game, a little girl was seated in the midst of the circle with a book in her hand, and her companions were repeating their catechism to her!

It was a pleasing sight. The bright countenances of the poor ragged children, and the intelligence with which the little girl corrected their mistakes, delighted Mr. Stanley.

On speaking to her, he found that she had been for some time attending daily at a little school about two miles off; and that in her spare hours she taught her sisters and other children of the hamlet.

"How desirous of instruction these good people must be," said Mr. Stanley. "I wish our peasantry were half as ardent about their improvement. But, after all, the catechism that little girl has been teaching is not ours."

"No," replied Mr. Desmond; "but is it not very desirable that people should learn the principles of the religion they profess—that they should know what Christianity is—to whichever creed they belong? Truth, even though mixed with error, is preferable to entire ignorance."

When standing on the rath, Evelyn observed that other raths, or earth-works, were in view at different distances, and she made many inquiries in regard to them; in reply to which Mr. Desmond informed her that there were different kinds of raths, but that such as that on which they were standing, the summit of which was surrounded by straggling old thorns, and round which the remains of a ditch or embankment may be still distinctly traced, were well known to have been the site of ancient villages, where numerous small dwellings were crowded together within the ditch or rampart. "But," he added, "there are some earth-works which are hollow, and divided into different apartments, in which the harvest and the arms of those simple people were stored. That those mounds were also used for signal fires seems probable, because they are so situated throughout the country as to communicate with each other for the distance of many miles."

"I see in the distance one of those barrows, as I have been accustomed to call them," said Mr. Stanley, "which seems to be of a greater height and more perfect form than those near us."

"That one," replied Mr. Desmond, "is here named a *moat*. Artificial heights of that kind were made for the purpose of holding councils—the chief always standing in the centre, the people in circles around him. Some moats still retain distinct traces of the terraces on which the people sat

or stood when the *brehon* or judge promulgated the laws. They were formerly called *folk-moat*, because such numbers of people were assembled on them."

"The custom of holding councils on moats must have been very ancient," said Mr. Stanley.

"There is one in the Isle of Man," said Mr. Desmond, "called the Tynewald Mount, on which councils are held to this day: the members of the Manx Parliament (or House of Keys) go to it in procession in order to proclaim any new law or regulation; and after the morning service has been read in the neighbouring chapel, they assemble on the Tynewald, from the centre of which they address the people, who are standing around with their heads uncovered, and there they read the law in both English and Manx."

"Hah! that is very interesting indeed!" said Mr. Stanley; "for it connects us at once in imagination with former times, and, indeed, in more than imagination—it becomes reality. Is the mount very high?"

"Not very," replied Mr. Desmond; "just sufficiently so to enable everybody on the ground to see and hear what is going on. It is in the centre of the island, and is said, but I cannot answer for the truth of it, to be composed of earth which has been brought from every one of its parishes."

Having wandered about the rath and the ruin as much as every one wished—and none of the party were in a hurry—they set out on their return, the children laden with specimens of various grasses and wild plants; nor was Mr. Stanley without a treasure—for he was a collector of ferns, and had the gratification of finding two which he had never seen before. They arrived safely at home without any other adventures, enjoying the charming evening as they had the morning, pleased with their excursion, and in good humour with each other; though Evelyn's manners were rather variable towards her sister—sometimes treating her as a little child—at others, conversing with her as a companion. Mabel, however, was steadily kind and good-humoured, though sometimes surprised.

The whole party were anxious lest Mrs. Desmond should have suffered by the exertion she had made, and Evelyn was quite touched when Mrs. Desmond acknowledged that the

desire not to be separated from her had been the chief inducement to accompany them.

The evening passed agreeably. Evelyn was asked to sing—and though rather out of practice, her own pianoforte not having yet arrived at Cromdarragh, her performance surprised both her father and Mrs. Desmond. She had had the advantage of the best masters in London, for Sir Connor had wished his dear granddaughter to excel in his favourite art; and her natural taste assisted them in doing full justice to their instructions.

CHAPTER XIII.

Evelyn determined to have a School — The Plan — She conquers her Pride — Anecdotes of General Rossas — Election of a Patriot General — Golden crested Wren — Types of Birds — Mrs. Desmond's Garden.

THE Round Tower—the ruin—the rath and its old trees—the distant moat—the lake, and the willow-tree decked with rags—the little girl instructing her companions—all were discussed at breakfast the following morning, with such variety of remark that Mr. Desmond was satisfied that he had not wasted his time on unobservant persons.

Evelyn's thoughts frequently recurred to the poor little girl sharing with her companions the instruction she had received—a testimony, were any wanted, both of the desire of the Irish for instruction, and of their generous disposition, which often prompts them to share all they possess, even their last morsel, with those who need it. She had strongly expressed her ardent wish that schools should be established in different parts of her estates immediately—a desire with which Mr. Stanley assured her he was willing to comply, as far as he could influence Mr. Driver.

"But I am determined to have them," said she. "If for the sake of a paltry saving he refuses to order them to be built, I will build them out of my own allowance. The education of my poor must not be interfered with: at all events, I will build one as soon as I return home, very large and very near the castle."

"Do you think you can have money enough?" said Mabel: "building is so expensive."

"But I do not intend to have an expensive building," replied Evelyn: "one large school-room, and a good comfortable house adjoining for the schoolmistress; not a great,

high, staring house—but low, and like a large beautiful cottage, covered with roses and creepers. What do you think of it, papa?”

“Think—of what, my dear?”

“About the schools I intend to build directly—one near the castle, and two more at some distance. Would not the expense of such simple buildings be very trifling?”

“Indeed, my dear, I think three schools all built at once would be a heavy expense. Suppose you were to try one only at first,—you will then find whether you are equal to the greater expenditure.”

“Very well; I will send for the mason, and make him begin one as soon as I go home.”

“Have you a plan ready for him?”

“Oh! that will be easily made. I intend to have two large, airy schoolrooms, with good bedchambers, and kitchen, and dairy, and store-room, and a parlour, with a picturesque portico or verandah, or some such thing.”

“That would cover too much ground, I fear.”

“Oh no, papa; it would be so pretty: low there and high here—very irregular—like a building in a drawing.”

“Have you drawn the plan?”

“No, I have not.”

“Then how can you expect the mason to build?”

“I meant to describe it to him, as I describe to the gardener how I would have a flower-bed.”

As Evelyn finished this sentence Gerald burst into a loud laugh. Mabel smiled a little; and Mr. Stanley involuntarily exclaimed, “My dear Miss O’Brien!”

“Hush, Gerald! it is not civil or kind to laugh,” said Mr. Desmond. “I see, my good Evelyn, you are anxious to be useful, and I highly approve of it; but you do not know how to begin. Do not mind these saucy laughs, which have made you blush; and let me explain to you that a plan, however simple the building, is always requisite for a mason, that he may know what he is to do, and what his dimensions are to be. Take your pencil, and make a little sketch on paper of your plan, and I will correct it: but do not look so frightened, my love.”

"No, papa; but—indeed—I—never drew a plan in my life, and I do not know how," said she, blushing again.

"Well, well—begin now; no matter how ill your pencil-sketch may be done. When you have fixed on the general idea and arrangements and proportions, you shall draw a proper plan, and Mabel shall assist you."

"Mabel!"

"Yes, Evelyn: she knows very well how to draw a plan; you do not: and if you were pleased yesterday at seeing one little girl teaching others, why should you not like it now?"

"I don't know; but, papa, I am afraid Mabel will laugh at me!"

"No; I will answer for her that she will not: she has too much good sense, as well as good nature. Sit down at once, and consider your plan, that we may have Mr. Stanley's opinion. When anything expensive is to be done, it should be well considered first. Houses cannot be unbuilt or altered in an hour, as you can remove your plants, or pick out the flowers of your needlework."

Evelyn felt very awkward while attempting the plan; but overcoming, as well as she could, the little pride always lurking in her heart, which increased her dread of being laughed at, she did make an irregular ground-plan—not in due proportion, indeed, but such as could be easily understood.

Her father then told her how much the charge for mason-work was per foot, and made her calculate what the walls alone would cost; then the timber and slates for the roof, and so forth. It was a new exercise to her; but when her mind was intent on any object she forgot her own trouble and the observations of the bystanders, and, steady to her plan, worked out the calculations correctly, and saw at once that it was too magnificent, and would in any case be imprudent, diminishing her power of being useful by devoting too large a portion of money to school-building, while much beside would remain to be done. A new sketch of a new plan was then made, of more moderate pretensions; the length and breadth, doors, windows, and fireplaces were marked on each room; and Mr. Desmond desired her to draw one neatly, according to a scale.

"I don't know how," said she, in a half voice. "Will you be so kind as to teach me, papa?"

"Mabel will teach you."

Evelyn coloured up, hesitated, and then said, "But I should like to learn from you—to learn the best way at once."

"Mabel draws all my plans, I assure you, when I want any for my cottages." Evelyn's countenance showed how her little proud heart swelled at the idea of learning from her younger sister; but Mr. Desmond, taking no notice of it, desired Mabel to bring her case of instruments, and assist her while he went out to walk with Mr. Stanley. Mabel, showing her sister what instruments to use, and drawing a small plan as a specimen, left her to herself for a few minutes to recover. There were several mistakes in Evelyn's attempt; but she was relieved by finding that, instead of turning her into ridicule, or calling her foolish, as she had expected, the kind little Mabel gently showed her the faults, and advised her, as it was but small, to do another before papa came back.

"Oh, thank you, Mabel; you are so good not to laugh at or despise my ignorance. I will try again; but it is mortifying to appear so ignorant to you."

"Less mortifying, surely, than if you had pretended to more knowledge than you have. We have not all the same opportunities: you have knowledge of various kinds which I do not possess, far superior to that of drawing straight lines and right angles; and, therefore," added she, seeing Evelyn's countenance brighten a little, "I am in hopes you will share with me some of what you have learned from your London masters."

Evelyn, delighted at the idea which her generous sister had suggested to comfort her, kissed her fervently, exclaiming, "Yes! yes! if indeed I am capable of teaching anything—if you will not dislike learning from me!"

"I cannot imagine why I should!—indeed, dear Evelyn, I shall doubly value whatever you teach me. But, come now, let us finish our work; for though papa is always so mild and good, do you know that he is not quite pleased if whatever he has directed is not done at the time he appoints," said

Mabel, as she laid a fresh piece of paper before Evelyn, and showed her how to finish the angles neatly, and to attend to all those small things which are of consequence to completeness in everything. The most beautiful architectural drawing may be utterly spoiled by want of exactness.

Evelyn had just completed her plan, and, she flattered herself, free from faults and quite right. When her father returned, he saw that she was again all radiant with good humour; and, examining what she had done, he whispered to her that it showed at least that she had conquered herself. "Very well, my dear, for your first plan—your first essay in architecture; very neatly done. Mabel has a promising pupil, I must say. But tell me, Evelyn, did she laugh at you, as you expected?"

"No, papa; but——" Evelyn stopped, for she was conscious that she had felt something more than the fear of ridicule. Mr. Desmond, interrupting her, said gravely,

"A weak and vain mind fears the laugh of fools, and therefore meanly joins in the folly it despises. There is no laugh, my dear daughter, that the upright and wise should dread."

"Except it be such a laugh," said Mr. Stanley, "as that of the patriot General, Rosas. Do you recollect that anecdote in Darwin's delightful journal?"

"I have not read it yet," said Mr. Desmond; "pray tell it."

"Gerald is not here," said Evelyn. "I must call him. He went away this morning, papa, when he saw that you were displeased at his laughing at me; pray let him now share in our amusement."

Gerald was soon found; and Evelyn felt doubly happy at having recollected him at the right moment. Mr. Stanley then began—

"Darwin tells us that General Rosas is enthusiastic but very grave. His gravity is sometimes carried to an extreme, as in the following instance. One of his buffoons—for he keeps two for his amusement—told the anecdote to Darwin, which he says he gives, as well as he could recollect, in his own words:—'I wanted very much to hear a piece of music, so I went to ask the General. "Go about your

business," said he, "for I am engaged." I went a second time; and he said, "If you come again I will punish you." A third time I asked, and he *laughed*. I rushed out of the tent; but it was too late; he ordered two soldiers to catch and *stake* me. I begged to be let off: but when the General laughs he never spares the object of his anger.' Mr. Darwin adds, that the poor fool seemed still to feel its effects. Staking is a very severe punishment: four posts are driven into the ground, and the man is extended by his arms and legs horizontally, and thus left to stretch for several hours. The idea is evidently taken from the method of drying hides."

"Thank you," said Mr. Desmond. "That laugh was indeed to be dreaded; but Heaven defend us from such patriots here!"

"There is another anecdote," said Mr. Stanley, "which I must tell you while it is in my mind, as it serves to show the extraordinary mixture of greatness and barbarity in the character of Rosas."

"What firm discipline there must be in his army!" said Gerald; "his soldiers must fear him so much!"

"Perhaps so; yet the discipline of fear is not so lasting as that which is preserved by affection and justice," said Mr. Desmond; "but pray go on, Mr. Stanley."

"General Rosas is, as you know, a man of great influence in the country, and the owner of a prodigious extent of land. His celebrity originated in the strict laws he made for his own *estancia* or farm, and many stories are told about the rigid manner in which they were enforced. One of these was, that no man, on penalty of being put in the stocks, should carry his knife on a Sunday—gambling and drinking being so much the custom on that day, that quarrels often arose, which proved fatal because the custom of fighting with the knife was so general.

"One Sunday that the Governor came in great form to pay the estancia a visit, Rosas, hastening to receive him, walked out with his knife as usual stuck in his belt. The steward touching his arm, reminded him of the law; upon which Rosas, turning to the Governor, said he was extremely

sorry, but that he must go into the stocks, and till let out he had no power to receive him.

"After a little time the steward was persuaded to open the stocks and let him out; but no sooner was he set at liberty than he said to the steward, 'You have now broken the laws, and must take my place in the stocks.'"

"He must have felt very secure of his established influence," said Mrs. Desmond, "before he risked the effect on the people of seeing their master suffering such a punishment."

"Mr. Darwin tells us," replied Mr. Stanley, "that such actions delighted the Gauchos, who have all very high notions of their own dignity."

"What a difference there is between man and man," said Mrs. Desmond, "in the power of acquiring influence over the multitude! it is sometimes quite unaccountable."

"It is so," replied Mr. Desmond; "but in most cases we shall find, on studying the characters of such men, that it is a chivalrous forgetfulness of self, which endears them to those whom they command, though it may be accompanied by the sternest justice."

"The power which General Rosas possesses over the minds of the people," said Mr. Stanley, "has arisen very much from his being a perfect horseman—a very important accomplishment in a country where an assembled army elected its general by the trial I am going to relate to you."

"To elect a general by a trial sounds rather extraordinary," said Mrs. Desmond.

"It does indeed," said Mr. Stanley; "but so it is. A troop of unbroken horses, being collected in a *corral* (the enclosure where cattle are kept for slaughter), were then let out through a gateway, over which was a cross-bar. It was previously agreed that whoever should drop from the bar on the back of one of these wild animals as it rushed out, and should be able without saddle or bridle not only to ride it, but also to bring it back to the door of the corral, should be elected the general of the patriot army. This extraordinary feat was performed by General Rosas."

"Oh! thank you, Sir," exclaimed Gerald; "I should like to hear more of that gentleman, if you please."

"Well, so you shall some other time, but not now: we are losing this charming day," said Mr. Stanley. "I have not seen your garden yet, Mrs. Desmond; will you take us there now?"

The proposal was agreed to, bonnets were quickly tied on, the large window which opened on the walk to the garden was thrown up, and as they went out Gerald bounded joyfully on, to show the way, as he said, to the greenhouse. The afternoon was beautiful; the whole garden was brilliant with the gay variety of flowers, and the bright sunshine set off the few plants still remaining in the conservatory.

As Mrs. Desmond approached it, Gerald came running to tell her there was a bird in the window—a golden-crested wren, he believed.

"A golden-crested wren! I have never seen one. Oh, I wish I could see it!" exclaimed Evelyn, rushing impetuously to the door.

"Stop, stop, my dear," said Mrs. Desmond; "I will show it to you; but follow me very quietly—come in gently—we must not frighten it."

The poor little bird, overwhelmed with terror, however, at finding itself in a prison, as the house must have appeared to it, had been trying to escape through the window; but, disappointed there, and still panting, it now concealed itself under the leafy branches of a large geranium and ceased to flutter.

Mrs. Desmond's hand slowly passed the geranium-leaves, and was gently, though quickly, placed over the bird. She held her prisoner in her hands, and, having desired that the door should be shut to prevent its escape, turned towards Evelyn and opened her hand a little. But what was her surprise to find the bird dead! the eyes closed—the legs stretched out—no motion—no appearance of life! Grieved to think that unconsciously in seizing she must have bruised it, Mrs. Desmond took the bird into the fresh air, but it still remained motionless: quite sad at her unintentional cruelty, she held it on her hand for Evelyn to examine, and very much did they admire its small and elegant form and the brightness of the golden spot on its head.

Mr. Stanley, too, was glad to examine it, for he had never before had an opportunity of seeing one so closely. They looked at it again and again, discussing its habits and lamenting its death, and Mrs. Desmond, saying she would have it stuffed for Evelyn, laid it on the grass. But no sooner had she turned away from the bush under which it was laid, than the little wren cautiously opened its eyes—saw it was at liberty—rose quickly on its pretty little feet—and, extending its wings, rapidly darted away, leaving all the spectators in astonishment at its power of acting death, and of continuing the deception during the length of time it had been under examination.

“Well, I do think it was worth coming to Ireland,” said Mr. Stanley, “to see that only. No wonder its inhabitants are considered clever, when even its birds are such good actors.”

“I think I have heard that the partridge also pretends to be dead in order to protect her young when she sees enemies near,” said Evelyn.

“Yes,” said her father; “that circumstance is well known to English sportsmen.”

“I am no sportsman,” said Mr. Stanley, “nor have I indeed very much observed the habits of birds; but I think I shall begin to do so now that my attention has been drawn to the subject, and I hope my wish to know more about birds may not fly away like them.”

“I am certain,” replied Mr. Desmond, “that you will be repaid by the amusement and interest you will derive from the study; and though, perhaps, you may have less of the ardour of youth, yet you will probably be more methodical in the pursuit, than if it had been an early one.”

“In reading about birds in other countries,” said Evelyn, “I have often been surprised at observing that some kinds of birds seem to belong only to particular regions, while others are seen everywhere.”

“Yes,” said her father, “it is curious to observe that some groups of birds appear, as you say, to be confined to certain regions; but another equally curious fact is, that there are in general types of them everywhere, while, on

the other hand, those apparently of trivial value are diffused over the greater part of the world."

"I do not know exactly what you mean, papa, by types of birds," said Evelyn.

"Corresponding species," replied Mr. Desmond. "It is thought by some ornithologists that in each region there are, as you remarked, families of birds, which, though essentially different and varying in their habits, according to their geographical situation, are analogous in form or have some one general point of similitude. For instance, the humming-birds of America correspond with the nectar-feeders of India, or sun-birds as they are called, and with others in the Indian islands, as well as in Africa and Australia; in short, they think that each group has its representative, one that somewhat resembles it in its habits and nature, in each of the principal divisions of the world. And therefore some modern naturalists have proposed to divide the world into zoological provinces; that is to say, according to the zoological productions of each region."

"But papa," said Evelyn, interrupting him, "how could such a division be distinct? there are so many birds that migrate from one region to another, that I think it would be impossible to draw a line, or say to which division of the globe they most naturally belonged."

"I was going to say," replied her father, "that there is one fact which appears to be opposed to that arrangement, and perhaps is not generally known, namely, that those North American birds which seem to have no representative in Europe, or, on the other hand, those European genera which appear to have no corresponding species in America, are almost without exception migratory, and belonging to types of forms characteristic of those regions where they pass the winter. This replies to your remark, Evelyn."

"Yes, papa, very satisfactorily; but I have often wished to know what it is that causes some birds to migrate while others are contented to be always stationary, and I think that what you have just said shows that much might be discovered by close observers."

"I fear it is quite beyond our reach," said Mrs. Des-

mond, "to penetrate so far into the secrets of that wisdom which has allotted their peculiar habits to each of the families of living creatures that dwell on the earth; yet the fact which your father has mentioned may be productive of many interesting deductions. It would be a new subject of inquiry, at least not a common branch of natural history, to discover the laws which might be supposed to regulate and circumscribe the dispersion of particular species."

"It would be a pleasing study, and would certainly open a wide field of pursuit," Mr. Stanley remarked, "for travellers, and all who are not tied to one spot as I am."

"But I wish, papa," said Evelyn, "that you would give some further explanation of what you alluded to about types or representatives of birds."

"I meant to say, my dear, that the corresponding or geographical representations of groups and species inhabiting different localities are, in some cases, very striking—I do not know whether my meaning is clear."

"Oh, yes; I understand that perfectly," exclaimed Evelyn.

"Then pray explain it to me," said Mr. Stanley.

"Explain it?" Evelyn repeated. "Yes. There are tribes somewhat similar in form and habits in opposite regions, but—but—I do not know what they are, so I do not exactly know the whole of what papa meant; and so, dear papa, you must teach both me and my guardian."

"According to Mr. Vigors the naturalist," her father replied, "the ostrich of the African deserts is represented in Asia and its islands by the cassowary; by the emu in Australia; by the rhea in South America, the largest bird in that continent; and by the great bustard in Europe."

"I am as desirous as Evelyn to understand this subject," said Mr. Stanley. "Did he think that was the case with each prominent group or tribe?"

"Just so: he used to say that, wherever such representative is wanting, the deficiency is owing to some sufficient cause, which if understood would be found to agree with the harmony of all the works of the creation. Now there are instances of facts decidedly opposite to what I have mentioned of the distribution of corresponding tribes."

"Pray, papa, mention some of them at least," said Evelyn.

"The circumstance to which I allude is this: that, instead of corresponding tribes, in some cases the very same species is found in all parts of the world. For instance, the starling is described as inhabiting all parts of the world except perhaps Australia."

"What can be the reason, papa, of its not being in Australia?"

"The way in which it has been explained is this. In numerous instances the diffusion of animals throughout the various regions of the earth appears to be regulated by that of their prey. Now the starling seeks much of its subsistence on the backs of cattle; but in Australia there were not originally any ruminant quadrupeds, though since they were introduced by the colonists they have increased as if it were their native soil. It is supposed therefore that, as cattle were not, neither were starlings originally natives. The circumstance is a remarkable one, however, and may lead to other curious observations of the same nature, by which you may discover how beautifully things are linked together: the diffusion of animals being dependent on their prey—that again being dependent on the peculiar vegetation of each country—and that again dependent on the various soils to which that peculiar vegetation is adapted, and which vary with the different regions of the earth."

"To make such discoveries," exclaimed Evelyn, "or even to follow those which others have made, what extensive knowledge is requisite! One must fly like the birds themselves from one region to another. How delightful that would be!"

"As long as we can have the advantage of the gleanings of our numerous travellers we may be contented to exist without wings," said Mr. Stanley; "for instance, Mr. Fortune's 'Wanderings in China,' of which the beauty of this garden has just reminded me."

Mrs. Desmond's garden was indeed rich in flowery beauty, well situated on a sloping bank, at the bottom of which ran a little stream, and beyond it rose a small hill, partly wooded and partly pasture, on which cattle in various attitudes gave a perpetual interest to the scene.

The neatness of the garden, and the taste with which the most beautiful shrubs were intermixed with grass-plats and flower-beds, particularly attracted Mr. Stanley's notice, as well as the strawberry-garden, luxuriant in fruit, and quite irresistible in the hot weather of June.

The principal amusement of that evening was the microscope, in which Mr. Desmond showed many minute insects and also plants, among which was the *chara*, remarkable for the distinctness with which the circulation of the sap is seen within its stem.

There was a little plant of it in a pond near the greenhouse, and he treasured it more than some which were valuable from their rarity.

Afterwards Mabel and Gerald initiated Evelyn into some of their small plays, such as 'Why, when, and where?' for this the first word selected was "moat," which, as sound is in that play considered in preference to spelling, has so many meanings as to produce a proper degree of puzzle. Moat, a deep ditch of a fortification—mote, a small particle—moat, a mount or sudden rise of ground, &c.

Evelyn quickly entered into the spirit of the play, and distinguished herself in that and other amusements of the same nature by the animation and drollery with which she played her part; and her father and Mrs. Desmond, rejoicing to see her happy and at ease with her brother and sister, joined in some of their plays, and even Mr. Stanley took part in them.

CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Desmond's Management of his Tenantry — Visit to the Cottages
— Walk along the Edge of the Bog — The old Nurse.

THE next morning Mr. Stanley expressed his wish to visit some of the poor cottagers at Clonallen. So much has been said and written about the wretchedness of the lower Irish, he was anxious, he said, to judge for himself.

"If you have time and opportunity to do so, it will certainly be satisfactory," replied Mr. Desmond. "Yet there are many small circumstances to be considered before you can form a just opinion of their real state, which varies more than you may at first perceive in different localities."

"How do you mean? Surely all who have eyes can see whether people are wretched or comfortable, clean or dirty?"

"Yes, I grant that," said Mr. Desmond: "but you cannot in a short visit penetrate into the nature of the people, nor understand exactly with whom the blame lies that these people are not more comfortable: you cannot at once discover the truth, for you must be aware that in such cases a stranger who wishes to judge for himself must take some time for inquiry."

"Certainly, that is quite true," replied Mr. Stanley, "in regard to individual character; but here my object is to form one general opinion of the whole."

"Yes, I understand your object," said Mr. Desmond; "but I think it impossible. For instance, Evelyn's own tenantry are all really comfortable, for Sir Connor was an excellent landlord, and when he left the country appointed a good agent; yet you may see on some parts even of her property several miserable hovels; because some of the small farmers, who hold more land than they can cultivate for themselves, allow people scarcely beyond beggary to take

little portions of their holdings, where they settle themselves in the most miserable cabins. This is sometimes done by the farmers from mere compassion, but generally a small rent is paid by those intruders, though any rent for such places would be too high. The effect, however, is equally mischievous in either case, for the poor creatures are unable to repair their hovels."

"I am surprised that the custom is ever permitted," said Mr. Stanley.

"No wise landlord, indeed, should permit such a ruinous custom," said Mr. Desmond; "for there is another great evil to which it leads; people who have been turned off from other estates for idleness, or for worse conduct, take advantage of the yielding disposition of a neighbour, and thus the farm of many a quiet good natured man becomes a nest of idle, wicked people. For my own part, I have positively forbidden my tenantry to admit any of these outcasts into their holdings. I always keep the means in my own hands of giving an asylum to a poor but industrious family, but I will not suffer the national characteristic of this country—benevolence—to be destructive of comfort and happiness by indiscriminate generosity, nor my estate to be disgraced by peopling it with lazy, ill-conducted vagrants."

"But then, my dear papa," said Evelyn, "might it not be considered tyrannical to interfere with the advantage of your tenant by preventing him from letting his ground?"

"No, certainly not in my case; for I make it a positive condition to all who take land from me that they shall not underlet it without my sanction; and I assure you they soon become sensible of the benefit of being free from such neighbours. But come," added he, "the morning is charming; let us set out immediately. May not the children lay aside their studies this morning, my dear?"

"Undoubtedly," replied Mrs. Desmond; "I think I may accompany you myself, I feel so well: we shall all be glad of a holiday."

"Your being well and able to walk with us will increase the pleasure of the walk in every way," quickly added Mr. Stanley.

In a few minutes all were ready ; Mr. Desmond, leading them through some pretty fields, took the party to one or two farmers' houses, where the effect of their landlord's good sense and kindness was evident in many of the small contrivances for neatness and comfort which he had suggested. They next went into the cottages of a few of his labourers whose families were supported by their daily work. Some of them were very poor, but their houses were clean and tolerably comfortable, and their gardens showed how much may be effected by the influence of the master among the poorest. Mr. and Mrs. Desmond tried constantly to induce the inhabitants to keep both house and garden in order ; frequently visiting, advising, and assisting them with seeds for the one, or some little useful comfort for the other, encouraging the industrious by giving them on particular occasions a half-day for their own work —Mr. Desmond often, in unfavourable seasons, allowing them to make sure of the planting, or the saving, of their own crops (their chief dependence for the coming year) before his were attended to. He used often to say that the rich had time enough to secure their own crops and comforts, and had many other resources besides.

Mr. Stanley was surprised at finding these poor cottages much less miserable than he had expected, and in walking from one to the other he asked why they were better here than in other places of which he had heard.

"Because we have constant opportunities, being resident here, of exerting our influence, and of showing the interest we feel in their being clean and comfortable," replied Mr. Desmond.

"Besides, we do not allow ourselves to expect too much," added Mrs. Desmond. "We do not too peremptorily insist on the pig being kept out of the house, at least without first showing them a better way of keeping that most important treasure to the poor cottager ; and when we remonstrate about an odious heap of manure or a pool of green stagnant water at their door, we help them to make such alterations as preserve the benefit though the nuisance is removed ; and I must say that we find very few of these poor people ungrateful."

Mr. Stanley had already observed that in every cabin the Desmonds were welcomed with cordial affection and respect. Mr. Desmond and his family spoke with kindness to all. Their crops, their health, their comforts, and the progress their children made at school, were spoken of in that friendly tone which showed they were acquainted with all their concerns; and the people addressed Mr. Desmond with a confiding freedom which proved that his kindness was habitual, although no one enforced the laws with more strictness when it was necessary.

It was pleasant to see the interest which Mrs. Desmond's children also felt for these poor people—an interest which could never cease in after-life, because they acquired it practically by visiting and knowing them all, not merely in theory.

Notwithstanding Mrs. Desmond's efforts to prevent the people from ostentatious expressions of their gratitude, warm and heartfelt blessings were poured forth by many. One poor woman, addressing Mr. Stanley when he took notice of the cleanliness of her house and the neatness of her children, exclaimed, pointing to Mrs. Desmond, "Oh! how could I ever have reared my eleven children, or clothe or give them larning, but for herself? Isn't it she that covers the children, and teaches them at her school, and larns them to earn their bread by the needle, and help their parents? Oh! Sir, it is she that is always doing good! Oh! may she be received into heaven by the angels! And so she will! Yes, there will be an angel for every good action she ever done in her life to meet her—and crowds they will be—at the gates of heaven!"

"Oh! do not stop the effusions of this grateful creature," said Mr. Stanley in a low voice to Mrs. Desmond, who was trying to interrupt her. "I like to hear this pouring forth of the heart; though I must acknowledge there is something rather Oriental in the expressions."

"Come, then," said Mr. Desmond, laughing, "I will reward your candour by a walk along the edge of the great bog, and home by one more cottage inhabited by an old woman who will rejoice to see Evelyn."

"But you promised us a ramble *through* the bog, I thought, papa," said Evelyn.

"Yes, and you shall have it, but some other day. Your mother has been so kind as to accompany us this morning, and we must not go so far as to fatigue her." Evelyn looked disappointed; and he added, "Perhaps you will see enough to-day to satisfy you."

Turning down a shady lane which led from the cottages to the bog, they came to a clear rapid rivulet, along which they walked for some time on a smooth sward covered with a variety of wild flowers—tufts of least ladies' bedstraw intermixing beautifully with the wild thyme, while the orchis, with its erect spikes of flowers, contrasted prettily with the other plants, thus enamelling the ground on which the party trod; along with the delicate tormentilla creeping here and there among the little flowery tufts. At the other side of the rivulet they observed a complete change in the soil as well as in the plants; and as far as they could see on that side, heath seemed to grow in profusion over the vast extent of bog.

"What a great bleak place that bog is!" said Evelyn; "but this stream seems to separate it from us."

"Yes," said Gerald, "but we can easily get across, and I hope we may take you there some other day. I am so fond of gathering bog-moss and yellow asphodel, and jumping over the deep bog-holes, and of all the adventures one meets with in those wet places."

"Adventures! How do you mean?"

"Only that sometimes your foot gets into a bog-hole; or you find the heath slippery, and down you tumble; or you hear the curlew's wild cry; or perhaps the bittern booms its deep note as it flies over the wet marsh; and it is all so wild, and such sport to me, and indeed to Mabel."

"Sport, indeed! Very odd sport, I should think," said Evelyn.

"Come, Gerald, do not frighten your sister. We are now going to turn away from this disagreeable prospect," said Mr. Desmond, "to something she will like better."

As he spoke they came to a spot where the stream made a sudden bend which seemed to stop their progress; but, crossing

it on dry stepping-stones, they came into a nice little winding path along a moderately rising ground, where thickets of white-thorn, briers, and the broad-leaved shining willow, at once changed the scene. A few minutes brought them to another bend of the stream, close to which stood a neat comfortable cottage. The porch was covered by a large ever-blowing rose-tree carefully trained, while a weeping willow at the gable-end hung over a seat on which a respectable-looking old woman sat knitting.

"Oh, how charming!" exclaimed Evelyn. "It was worth while to walk along the ugly bog to come at last to such a dear little spot and such a nice old woman; but she does not seem to hear our voices."

"This is the person I mentioned to you, Evelyn, when we set out. She is quite deaf, but happily she sees well, and is constantly employed. She was nurse to —. But come, my dear Evelyn, I want her to see you, for she nursed your mother, my child," said Mr. Desmond. Taking Evelyn by the hand, he hastened towards the old woman, who had just looked up from her knitting. She rose instantly to welcome Mr. Desmond; and then, looking at Evelyn, started back, clapping her hands over her eyes; but in the next instant, recovering herself, looked again at Evelyn, blessing her, and exclaiming, as the tears fell from her eyes, that she was the very image of her mother.

"Oh! Sir, it is herself, my own dear child: it is she—almost, but more colour and more strength; and her smile—oh yes! there it is now indeed, and her bright look. May all the blessings of Heaven descend upon you, dear Miss Evelyn!" And seizing her hand, she pressed it repeatedly to her aged lips; then looking towards the rest of the party, who were at a little distance, she pressed Evelyn's hand again, and, giving a significant nod of satisfaction as she looked towards Mrs. Desmond, she said, in a low voice, "I am glad to see *her* with you. It is she that deserves it, for she is as good a creature as ever breathed; and she is as kind to me as my own dear Miss Evelyn would have been if she had been spared!"

The old nurse then invited them into her house, which

both Mr. and Mrs. Desmond had taken delight in making comfortable; she showed Mr. Stanley her own neat bedroom, where her granddaughter was her companion; and her son's room, and all his little contrivances to make the house convenient; and her garden, which had been laid out by Mrs. Desmond and filled with gay flowers; and her pretty hens; and, late as it was, she could with difficulty be prevented from boiling eggs for the children. Having sat a short time, they took leave of the affectionate old nurse, Evelyn promising to come again. Mrs. Desmond unlocked a door in a high wall at the back of the cottage; and, entering the garden of Clonallen, Evelyn found to her surprise that they had actually come to the end of their expedition, while she had imagined they had still a long walk to take before they could reach home.

CHAPTER XV.

Sunday School — Esau's Birthright — Prudence should accompany
Generosity.

ON the Sabbath morning, both Mr. Stanley and Evelyn having requested permission to visit the Sunday-school along with Mrs. Desmond and Mabel, they all went there together by a short pleasant walk. The morning was fine, and Mr. Stanley learned with great satisfaction that, except in very bad weather, Mr. Desmond never used his carriage on Sunday.

The school was well attended. The intelligence and quickness of the children in giving their answers and in referring to Scripture proved how well they had been instructed. A few other ladies belonging to the parish assisted Mrs. Desmond, and shared in her gratification at hearing Mr. Stanley express himself highly pleased with their methods, and sensible of the sincerity of that zeal and benevolence which induced them to devote a portion of their Sunday to the labour of teaching the ignorant; "But," added he afterwards, as they went from the school to the church, "I cannot call it labour to instruct such intelligent children, who have, it would appear, been selected for superior talents."

"No, no," said Mrs. Desmond, "all the children of the parish are invited without choice or favour to come here, and all are welcome. When you visit the week-day parish-school here, or my own little school, you will perceive the same brightness of mind among all the children."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Stanley: "you have then the best encouragement for your exertions. I am quite charmed with their quickness of understanding. I believe," added he smiling, "I shall at last come to settle in Ireland, for the pleasure of living among such an intelligent people!"

The church, with its pointed spire, was well placed on the side of a small hill adjoining the village; and the neat

churchyard, shaded by old trees, well accorded with the perfect order of the building within. The benevolent countenance of the clergyman, and the unaffected piety with which he officiated, were not lost on Mr. Stanley, who listened with great attention to the sermon, which was preached with just energy enough to make it impressive without display; showing that his heart was filled with affectionate zeal for the real welfare of his congregation. His text was from Hebrews xii. 17, and in the course of his sermon he remarked, that the birthright which Esau sold does not appear to have been his father's possessions, or any worldly riches, such as the portion and inheritance of the eldest son. No mention is made in the history of that kind of possessions; and it must therefore have been a birthright of some profound and peculiar value. What could it be? No other than the honour of being the founder of that race from which should spring the blessed Messiah, who was to bruise the serpent's head. It had been foretold ages before. Esau was aware of the privilege and of the promise, yet he sold it for the mere gratification of his appetite; for a mess of pottage he exchanged the glory that the Saviour's descent would confer on him and his posterity, and chose to forego the high honour to which he had been entitled merely to assuage his hunger. "And thus it is," continued the preacher, "that worldly people too often sacrifice their hopes of heaven to the momentary indulgence of their passions! Though Esau had thus voluntarily exchanged his glorious right to that peculiar blessing 'for one morsel of meat,' yet he still hoped to soften his father's resentment and to regain his birthright: but the time was past—the opportunity was gone. In vain he implored his father to relent—he was rejected, as he himself had rejected the offered blessing, 'for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.' It has been said by some that Esau was hardly treated, since his repentance was not accepted, because forgiveness is promised to all who repent; but they misunderstand that text. The real meaning of the Apostle is, that he could find no means of softening his father; though he tried with tears and entreaties, he could not make him alter his determination,

because, in fact, it did not depend on Isaac. As a father he might have been touched by his son's repentance, but it was not for him to restore the privilege or to change the decree of the Almighty. The choice had been offered to Esau; he might have possessed the gracious privilege—the noble endowment—that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed: but the immediate gratification of his senses had made him forego the spiritual privilege, and the opportunity was lost—'the door was shut.'

"May not this apply to us all? It is now *our* birthright to be Christians—to be amongst the redeemed—to be pardoned through the then promised Saviour, whom Esau rejected; if *we* reject him by deficient faith and sinful life, and, like Esau, despise the privileges offered to us, then, like him, we shall be excluded from the promised pardon and the offered blessing.

"In one important circumstance, indeed, our case materially differs from that of Esau; he had unworthily parted with his birthright—no change was allowed—no repentance could recall the blessing which he had voluntarily given away to another person. But to us salvation *is* offered, without money and without price; it is offered to *all*—Christ himself has promised to procure it for us—to obtain the remission of our sins. We are invited by him to repent; the aid of the Holy Spirit is promised to enable us to become new creatures; and there is no decree to prevent our being accepted if with faith and a repentant heart we cry, 'Bless me also, O my Father!'"

There was an earnestness, and at the same time a simplicity, in the style and manner of the preacher which pleased Mr. Stanley, who strongly expressed his approbation.

"I like the manner and countenance of your clergyman," said he, as they walked home; "he is, I am sure, a good man."

"Yes," replied Mr. Desmond, "and an agreeable companion also, but we can seldom obtain his company: he is a most hardworking man, diligent in preaching the truth to all, and in giving such instruction to the ignorant as may lead them into the 'true way.' You must be surprised at not

having seen him at our house, but he has been too much engaged among his flock to come to us. Sunday is with him far from a day of rest, for he is now going to a small congregation among the western hills, where he officiates and attends a school also."

"But why cannot he have assistance, papa?" said Evelyn; "surely a curate would save him much trouble."

"No doubt a curate would be very desirable, my dear, but his very small income would make such an expense impossible; for besides supporting his little family he gives largely to the distressed; and as long as he is healthy and active he feels it to be doubly his duty to avoid expense."

"How delightful it would be for any rich person, who was mistress of their own money, to pay a curate to relieve him!" exclaimed Evelyn with a sigh.

"Many of our most useful clergymen are thus limited in their means to a painful degree, and yet that very poverty often produces useful or gratifying consequences. As an instance, this worthy pastor, of whom I have been speaking, and who has not been very long among us, was so beloved by the inhabitants of the parish where he had been curate before he came here, that all those who were possessed of horse or donkey—people of all sects—proved their attachment to him by conveying his furniture and property here for him and would accept of no remuneration."

"How much that circumstance speaks for each party!" said Mr. Stanley.

"Yes!" said Mr. Desmond. "Justice and impartial kindness seldom fail to produce affection and gratitude."

"What an example those poor parishioners set to the rich!" said Evelyn. "How many I might aid if I only had the use of my own money! but I am only allowed money to spend on myself. I should like to be so munificent!"

"I know that is your disposition, Evelyn," said Mr. Stanley, "but till your judgment is more steady some restraint is necessary. Do not however think that we wish you to spend money on yourself only. To secure the pleasure of being really generous, you must deny some unnecessary indulgences to yourself. Besides, just consider that you have more

money at your disposal than this good clergyman who does so much—more, indeed, than many other clergymen.”

“Yes, the power of being generous,” said Mr. Desmond, “depends on our prudence, and its sole virtue on our being willing to sacrifice our own self-indulgence to the necessities of others.”

“But sometimes,” said Mrs. Desmond, “the indulgence we must sacrifice is the most difficult to one of Evelyn’s disposition to relinquish—the pleasure of giving largely—yet it interferes, perhaps, with other smaller, though more necessary charities.”

“In short,” said Mr. Stanley, “though we are told to do good and to distribute, we must not squander even our charities, or we shall be unable to do good rightly.”

Evelyn looked grave, she sighed, and for some minutes all were silent, till Mr. Stanley observing that they were returning from church by a different path from that which they had gone in the morning, noticed the river and its pretty banks, on which were scattered trees and neat cottages. They looked into two or three as Mr. Stanley wished to see them, and found the families neatly dressed and happily enjoying the Sabbath-day’s rest. In one the father of the family was reading the Bible; in another the Irish reader was explaining the Scriptures to several poor people, who listened with avidity and delight.

“I do not like intruding on their happy day of rest,” said Mrs. Desmond, “and I prefer going to them on a week-day, though we may not find them as clean or as well prepared for a visit from strangers.”

“No, but we shall see them in their habitual state,” said Mr. Stanley laughing.

They soon afterwards arrived at home, and the remainder of the day was spent partly in reading and partly in serious, yet social conversation.

There was no evening service at the church, the rector being obliged to visit the other extremity of the parish, where there were several families who were unable to attend the morning service. But Mr. and Mrs. Desmond had long been in the habit of reading to their family every Sunday

evening, not only the prayers, but the Psalms and appointed lessons, being of opinion that we should not omit those important parts of the evening service which by exciting the attention of the congregation give them an increased interest in the prayers.

A few of their poorer neighbours, who would have gone to evening service had there been any at the church, gladly accepted Mr. Desmond's invitation to join the family worship.

Mabel, as usual, read the Psalms along with her father, while Mrs. Desmond read the lessons with a clear soft voice, in a distinct and unaffectedly impressive manner. On the present evening Mr. Stanley was requested to read prayers, and he observed with satisfaction the profound attention of some of those poor but pious people who had come to this little congregation. He read a short sermon, and then concluded the service with the beautiful and comprehensive blessing in the sixth chapter of Numbers.

CHAPTER XVI.

Visit to the Great Bog — Decayed Plants — Ancient Forests of Ireland — Sphagnum — Stumps of Trees — Bog-Wood — House found under a Bog — Moving Bog — Bog-Trotters — Turf-Cutting — Irish Readers.

THE weather continuing favourable the next day, Mr. Desmond was reminded by his guest of the promised visit to the bog, and it was soon arranged that the day should be devoted to *bog-trotting*. Gerald and Mabel were of the party of course, but their mother would not venture, well knowing that Mr. Desmond's fear of her being fatigued might cause some restraint.

Provided with botanical cases, and a little basket of sandwiches, biscuits, and gingerbread, to fortify them in their rambles, they set out at eleven.

Passing through different fields from those they had last visited, and crossing by a rustic bridge over the same rivulet they had lately passed, they saw before them a vast extent of heath; along the edge of which the pretty bog asphodel, just coming into blossom, seemed to mark with its golden flowers the commencement of the adjoining wet and spongy morass.

As their path skirted it for some way, Evelyn's attention was directed by her father to the variations of the soils, which were marked by the different wild plants. On the most solid part of the bog heath grew in profusion, with sometimes a few furze-bushes intermixed; while on the damp edges of the path were sedge-grass and rushes; the beautiful *pinguicula* showing here and there in purple tufts. He then pointed to many wet patches where bright green moss appeared thickly spread over the surface, and, gathering a specimen of it, gave it to Mabel to put in her botanical case.

"That soft green mossy place looks very different from this on which we are walking," said Evelyn.

"Yes: but they are both called bog," said Mr. Desmond; "the name is given indiscriminately to very different kinds of substances; it always implies, however, something loose and infirm—a soft earthy substance; it is an Irish word which signifies shaky or trembling. In that mossy part the water is pent up near the surface, and renders it so soft, that if you attempted to walk there you would sink. On the other hand, those parts that have been either naturally or artificially drained, become, as you see, more dry and solid; and in that state bog may be more justly termed peat."

"You told me, papa, that bog is said to be formed of decayed trees and other vegetable substances," said Evelyn.

"Yes, that seems to be the general impression," he replied, "and with good reason I think; for it is well known that formerly extensive woods stood in the very places now occupied by bogs, both in this country and Great Britain as well as on the Continent; indeed I have heard of some instances where the trees that formerly stood there are still remembered by old people; and in many of our bogs the stems and roots of large trees are found at a great depth beneath the surface, which seems to confirm that opinion."

"But what threw down the trees, papa?"

"Some one of the many apparently accidental causes by which nature seems to work—a deposit of sand, washed down from the hills, may have formed a barrier or dam across the stream which conveyed it; fallen leaves, broken twigs, and fresh materials from the higher grounds, increase the barrier; and large pools of stagnant water being thus formed, the soil in which the trees stand becomes soft and loose, the roots gradually decay, and at length, easily yielding to the force of the winds, the trees themselves fall, adding immediate weight and solidity to the mass."

"It seems extraordinary," said Mr. Stanley, "that there should have been formerly such extensive forests in a country where nothing but bog now appears."

"Yes, but you remember Spenser says—

"Of woods and forests which therein abound,"

replied Mr. Desmond. "The face of the country has indeed changed; but observe, I do not confine the formation of bog to the fall of forests only, for many shallow bogs are to be found on the steep sides of our mountains, where it is not probable that thick woods ever stood, and where it is not possible that pools and stagnant waters could have ever existed. The humidity of our climate encourages the rapid growth of several plants which I shall presently have an opportunity of showing you, and which seem to be an essential part of all bogs. But in the mean time I wish to mention a fact worth your observation. It is—that pieces of the bark of trees are often found, undecayed, in the substance of the peat; their structure and fibrous appearance being so distinct in the inner rind that the very species of tree to which they belonged can be easily distinguished."

"How extraordinary it seems, papa, that in such a substance any part should preserve the form so distinctly as to show its species! May there not be some fancy in that?"

"No, my dear: I assure you that the fact is within my own knowledge; and I will add that the peculiar character of each bog may be traced by observing the remains of the different plants of which it was chiefly composed."

"I wish you would show me an instance," said Mr. Stanley.

"Most willingly," Mr. Desmond replied, leading them towards a party of men who were cutting a drain. "In the first place," said he, "you may observe the evident remains of heath in some places; but now, compare those scraps to which I point with my stick with the thick tufts of soft green moss that I showed you on the wet, impassable bog.—Mabel, have you the specimen I gave you?"

"Yes, papa, here it is; and here are also specimens that Gerald and I gathered of the *conferva* and the pretty little water *ranunculus*."

"Oh! as to that *ranunculus aquatica*, it contributes as much as any plant to the formation of bog. Growing very rapidly, it will in one summer spread over the whole surface of the water in which it is found, and its stems being all matted together it drops in winter to the bottom. The following summer a new layer spreads over the surface, and

then subsides in the same manner, and so on year after year ; so that this plant alone in a very few years, by accumulating from the bottom, decaying, and becoming mixed up with earthy particles, almost forms bog in itself. The same may be said of this *conferva*, so common in water. But the sphagnum, the most abundant of all the plants which tend to produce bog, and which flourishes equally in damp ground or in water, and in every region, assists in the formation of bog more than any other plant, in consequence of its peculiar habits. Some mosses grow only in shady places, others prevail in meadows, and the various aquatic plants require different soils ; while the sphagnum is found everywhere."

"I should like to know that peculiar habit of the sphagnum to which you allude," said Mr. Stanley.

"It is this :—its seed-vessel has no footstalk, like that which you may have observed in all other mosses, where the pretty little cups, supported on slender threads, scatter their seeds around ; but, in the sphagnum, the seed-vessel continues always close to the tuft of leaves in which it was formed ; the seeds vegetate among those leaves, and thus spread a new bed over its last year's withered layer. The young plants in due course produce their seed and wither in their turn ; and the same process thus continually taking place, layer upon layer is formed, which, acting like a wet sponge, presses down the old layers by its weight, and forms at length a compact mass of decaying vegetable matter."

"How satisfactory it is to know the causes of these things !" exclaimed Evelyn.

"Yes," replied Mr. Stanley ; "and how instructive it is sometimes to be allowed thus to peep behind the scenes as it were, and to see the manner in which nature works, as well as by what apparently small causes she produces the largest effects ! for instance now, this little insignificant plant has in the course of time conquered all other vegetation and has produced this mighty mass of bog by which we are surrounded."

"But there are many other water-plants," Mr. Desmond remarked, "which contribute their share also to the process, each of them working best in its own peculiar soil. The beautiful *nymphaea*, or water-lily, grows only on a firm bot-

tom, while the chara, which I showed you in the microscope, prefers a loose soil; and on the other hand, the sedge or carex is usually found in such marshes as are wet only in winter. Many of these plants become matted together by the pretty tormentilla into a spongy substance, which, by retaining the stagnant water, become mischievous to neighbouring trees and vegetation; and the gradual decay of all these vegetable matters produces bog, while, as I mentioned, their various natures contribute to the formation of the many different kinds of bog or peat which are observable."

"But, papa, if a wet soil thus produces bog, why do we not find it constantly on the banks of lakes and rivers?"

"Moisture alone," replied Mr. Desmond, "is not sufficient to cause its formation; it is the stagnation of that moisture acting on the peculiar nature of some vegetable substances. The banks of the rills and rivulets, which run even through bogs, are usually covered with sweet fresh herbage, as you may have observed to have been the case at the little stream along which we just now walked. Even when a stream overflows its banks it may make the ground soft and marshy, but as long as it is kept in motion, and does not *stagnate*, it produces no bog. This fact is so well known that in some of the English moors broad ditches or reservoirs are kept full of water, in order to flood or irrigate the moor occasionally by means of sluices; and it is remarkable that wherever those moors are subjected to temporary floods, moss ceases to grow, and very soon grass spreads over the surface."

"Have you ever seen an instance yourself, papa, of trees changing into bogs?" said Evelyn.

"Not of trees exactly within my memory; but in several places I have observed the growth of bog where it was well known that wood had once existed."

"But I do not comprehend," said Mr. Stanley, "if Ireland ever had woods in such abundance, how they came to be all destroyed."

Mr. Desmond smiled at Mr. Stanley's incredulity, and, reminding him that wherever the Romans carried their conquests they destroyed the forests, added, "And so, in like manner, the English, in their endeavours to subdue Ireland,

burned or cut down the forests which sheltered the natives. The branches, leaves, and fibres, decaying along with other plants, gradually formed a covering of peat over the fallen stems, so as in the course of centuries to conceal them ; and there they are to this day found in high preservation ; a proof at least that trees did formerly exist in those places, however doubtful you may consider the theory of the formation of bog originating in fallen timber."

"Are those stumps of trees found at any great depth in your bogs?"

"Yes ; in some places they are found on the gravel bed, altogether beneath the bog, especially the stumps of oak ; and the former abundance of that tree, at least in Kilkenny and Tipperary, may be argued from the common name of bog in those counties being *derries*, signifying the place of oaks."

"Certainly I have heard of your bog-oak and bog-wood, which are, I suppose, the same thing," said Mr. Stanley.

"No," replied Mr. Desmond, "the pine, of which more is found than of any other tree, is usually termed bog-wood ; and it is a curious circumstance that it retains so much of its resinous nature as to make it an admirable firewood. It is indeed a treasure to the poor in the neighbourhood of those bogs where it is found ; for while the turf supplies fuel, the bogwood gives so good a light that splinters of it are an excellent substitute for candles. But this wood has another valuable property : the tanning process it receives, during its long immersion in the bog, shields it from decay, and it becomes therefore a favourite material with the poor for the rafters of their houses, and still more for their gate-posts. You know common gate-posts, though ever so well painted, decay at the surface of the ground, whereas posts of bog-wood defy alike both drought and moisture."

"You said in the bogs where the pine is found. Is it not found in all bogs, papa?" Evelyn asked.

"No, my dear ; it is a curious fact that neither pine nor yew are ever found in the same place with oak. The oak is always in black bogs ; the pine and yew in red bog."

"I suppose," said Mr. Stanley, "that being formed chiefly of oak, the bog becomes black from the effect of that acid

which exists in oak and produces ink when combined with iron."

"Very probably," replied Mr. Desmond. "There is certainly a great difference between various bogs, which I attribute to the preponderance of one or other tree or plant in their formation."

"The finding of that bog-timber is of course a mere chance," said Mr. Stanley.

"The manner of discovering it is remarkable," said Mr. Desmond. "As the dew never lies on those places beneath which trees are buried, a man goes out early in the morning before the dew evaporates, taking with him a long slender spear. Thrusting this down wherever the absence of dew indicates timber, he discovers by the touch of the spear whether it be decayed or sound; if sound, he marks the spot, and at his leisure proceeds to dig up his prize, and in doing so he may sometimes happen to discover other curious remains of former times."

"How do you mean?" said Mr. Stanley, "what sort of remains?"

"Various gold ornaments," replied Mr. Desmond; "weapons too, both spears' heads and celts (one of those early implements which seem to be found in every region inhabited by man); and besides these and many other antiquities, tubs of butter, and even suits of clothes, have been found deeply buried in bog. I have myself seen the complete dress of a man, which was very lately discovered, and so perfect as to show distinctly both the form and the material."

"Oh! pray, papa, describe it to us; was it like the Highland dress, or was it a robe? or—"

"It was a woollen substance, somewhat of the nature of drugget, yet different, and very thick: there was an outer coat, the sleeves of which were made to button at the back seam the whole length of the arm from the shoulder down to the wrist; also an inner coat or vest; tight-fitting trowsers which came down to the ankles; and, to complete the suit, the shoes or *brogs** were along with it; they were formed of one

* The Irish mode of spelling the word.

piece of well-dressed strong leather, bent to the shape of the foot and made to tie at the ankle, something like the moccasins of the Indians."

"But the ancient Irish seem to have been very well covered, unlike the Indians."

"Yes, Evelyn, as far back as we have any traces of them we find reason to think they were civilized to a great degree. A few years ago a wooden house was discovered in Drunkelin Bog, in the county of Donegal, by a man when in search of timber."

"A house under the bog! is it possible! What had become of the inhabitants? was it very deep?"

"The roof of the house," replied Mr. Desmond, "was four feet below the then surface of the bog, of which much had been cut away for fuel; but, by levelling to the uncut parts, it appeared to have been sixteen feet below the original surface. It was very ancient. The framework of the house was firmly put together, but without any iron; the roof flat, of thick oak planks. There were two floors, one above the other, each only four feet high; one side was entirely open, from which circumstance, and the scanty height of the floors, I am disposed to think it had been some kind of storehouse, and not a dwelling. In those early times iron does not seem to have been in common use, for we find that small sharp bits of flint were employed for arrow-heads; rude axes and chisels were formed of hard stone; and it is remarkable that a stone chisel was found in this house which precisely fitted the mortices or holes in its framework. This curious building, when carefully removed, was found to have stood over a well-made drain; and a paved pathway was traced for several yards, at the end of which was discovered a hearthstone made of flat slabs of freestone. The hearthstone was covered with ashes, and near it were several bushels of half-burnt charcoal, with nutshells, some full, some broken, and others charred."

"But, papa, how could it have happened that the inhabitants let the bog grow over their house?"

"It is the opinion of those who have examined the place, and I think it very probable, that the house must have been suddenly overwhelmed by boggy matter; as bogs do often

suddenly burst out and cover large tracts, it seems the best explanation of the circumstance. I heard also of another house being more lately discovered, of stone, containing several chambers, and close to it a paved yard."

"What is in general supposed to be the cause of those sudden movements of bog?" said Mr. Stanley.

"It is supposed that the water lying beneath the uppermost strata, swelling suddenly, disturbs and forces them forward to a lower level. Such slips have occurred several times, and have caused great mischief and loss to the owners of cultivated land, many acres of which have at times been destroyed completely. A curious instance of this was observed some years ago in the west of Ireland. The workmen, cutting turf in an almost exhausted bog, discovered beneath it firm ground, which evidently had once been in cultivation, and the stumps of trees still standing upright; but on farther investigation, a stratum of bog was found beneath this once cultivated land, and below that again more cultivated land and more trees. It is plain, therefore, that there must have been repeated disruptions and overflow of bog, just in the same manner as we find described in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, by a gentleman of the county of Galway who lost many acres of valuable land by the moving of the bog of Addergoole."

"It is very remarkable," said Mr. Stanley, "that the good ground should have been so preserved underneath; I should have thought the whole would have become one mass of bog-stuff."

"It is curious; but I ascribe it to the waters of the overflowing bog having burst out with such violence as to flow off completely into the next stream, while the bog remaining dry formed a permanent covering to the good ground which it had destroyed. That circumstance occurred before my time; but about three-and-twenty years ago I myself saw the bog of Clara, in the King's County, a few days after it had burst its bounds in the same manner. It was a high and wet bog; the workmen had incautiously cut away too much of the solid dry bank, leaving it too thin for a barrier. Sudden and violent rain swelled the wet bog, and it broke through,

and, flowing like lava, one wave rolling over another, and overturning everything in its way, it poured impetuously over the fine rich pasture-grounds along the river bank, and so into the river Brusna. It was a complete scene of desolation when I saw it—everything destroyed and the bushes scattered about with their roots upwards: in short, its effects were like the older outbreaks of bog of which we have been speaking. The loss to the neighbouring gentlemen was very great."

During much of this conversation our party had gradually wandered on, till, coming to a green mound or knoll on which stood an old stump of hawthorn, they all agreed to rest in that dry little spot, which seemed to be purposely there for their convenience; and the basket of sandwiches was quickly emptied and gaily enjoyed.

While sitting near the old thorn-stump, they amused themselves examining the various mosses on the decayed tree and on the surrounding boggy ground—several different kinds; a few plants of cranberry spread their trailing branches over the surface of the bog, decking it with their nice little blossoms, like fairy cyclamen in form; thickets of bog myrtle, well named sweet gale, at some little distance from where they had been sitting, scented the air; while here and there were tufts of the pretty andromeda, a miniature shrub, which is found abundantly in some bogs. The delicate pink flowers of the bog pimpernel appeared in profusion in wet ground near the same place, and many other plants, the examination of which gave a pleasant variety to the observations of the party.

Having rested for some time, they set forward again. Mr. Desmond told them that he did not intend to return by the way they had come, so Evelyn was the more anxious to gather every pretty flower or green tuft of moss she saw. At length they came near the edge of the wettest part of the bog, called by the turf-cutters the *quaking bog*, and Evelyn, who was now going about in all directions in search of plants, ran forward towards it to gather one that appeared new to her.

"Stop, stop, Evelyn!" cried her father, hastening to call her; "that is a quagmire, my dear child, in which you would instantly sink."

"But I saw a man running over it," said she.

"Yes; but those only who are accustomed to it can do so without sinking. Such people are literally called bog-trotters, for they know how to pass lightly in a trotting pace over that sort of bog where others would inevitably sink, and they can thus easily escape from the pursuit of more cautious followers."

The drosera, or sundew, was the plant she had tried to gather: the beautiful glandular hairs upon the leaves glistening in the sunshine had attracted her notice, and she still looked with longing eyes towards its little dewy tufts. Just then a boy coming towards them across the next division of the bog, her father desired him to gather some for her, and she was satisfied.

As they came near that part of the bog where turf-cutters were at work, they perceived that the surface was covered with clamps of turf—Evelyn's *black bricks*, which, with numerous pits full of black water, gave a most dreary appearance to the whole. Again some plant tempted her, but Mabel called to her to take care, for she was surrounded by a number of treacherous bog-holes. "Yes, yes, I know," said she, but without stopping. "I will return directly."

The words were scarcely uttered, however, when down slipped her feet into a little hole she had not seen. "See, see, there she goes," cried Gerald. She called out loudly, with difficulty preventing herself from sinking, till a turf-cutter, leaping over a drain, came to her aid; and by the time that she had got out, her feet covered with black stuff, her father had come to her, the rest of the party remaining by his desire on the firm path.

She was a deplorable sight, but she was too much amused to lose her temper: the whole was a new scene to her, as well as an adventure, which consoled her for the figure she cut, and for being laughed at.

"Poor Evelyn!" said Mr. Stanley. "I fear much that she will take cold; we have no means of drying her wet things here in this desolate place."

"I think I know a place where they can be dried; and while in exercise, however uncomfortable, I trust she will escape cold," replied Mr. Desmond. "Come on this way."

In a few minutes they perceived a smoke rising out of the very surface of the bog, as it appeared to Mr. Stanley, but on coming near it he perceived to his great surprise that there was actually a sort of dwelling partly cut in the substance of the bog and partly built of sods of peat; a hole in the roof answered the purpose of a chimney, and something in the shape of a door hanging at the entrance closed it when necessary.

"What a miserable hovel!" exclaimed Evelyn.

Yet they were met at the door by a young woman with a cheerful countenance, who gave Mr. Desmond and the children a hearty welcome, and, receiving the strangers with the graceful hospitality so common among the Irish, placed seats at the fire for them, set something for Evelyn's bare feet to rest on, and, wiping the shoes and rinsing the black dirt out of the stockings, put them both to dry, and then warmly invited her guests to take share of some potatoes which had just been poured out of a great iron pot into a flat round basket. She presented to each a clean *noggin* (or wooden can) of fresh buttermilk, and, though all had feasted on the contents of their own basket, they willingly accepted her kindness.

As soon as Evelyn's stockings were dry Mr. Desmond and his party took leave of the hospitable woman. As they passed, Evelyn contrived, unobserved, to put a half-sovereign into her hand, which she rejected, but Evelyn forced it on her; and just then her husband coming home, she went to help him to his dinner, still holding the money in her hand.

"How cheerful she looks," said Evelyn, "though so poor, in such a house, and having no better food!"

"As to the food, I must say it is not bad," said Mr. Stanley; "though I should not like to be condemned to have no other. It must be preferable, certainly, to the fungus on which the Fuegians live; yet they are as contented, I suppose, with their fungus as these Irish are with the potato."

"What are those women doing with a soft black substance as if they were making it into turf?"

"They are exactly doing so," replied Mr. Desmond. "A good hard kind of fuel, which burns slowly, is formed of the wet parts of the bog that are unfit to cut; and when shaped

as you see, these turfs are left on the surface of the ground till they are dry."

The cutting turf was a new scene to Mr. Stanley as well as to Evelyn; the party stopped for some time to observe it, and he was amused at the animation with which these men conversed with each other in Irish. He spoke to some of the people at work, and the few who understood English amused him so much with their humour that he was delighted. Mr. Desmond pointed to a person who was cutting turf as one of those who are termed Irish readers, who when the day's work is over go in the evening from one neighbour to another for the purpose of reading the Scriptures in their native tongue to those who cannot read for themselves; they listen to them with extreme avidity and attention, the neighbours assembling in each other's cabins to hear them, sometimes spending their only penny on a candle, or perhaps lighting a bit of bogwood as a substitute.

Mr. Stanley, observing the intelligent countenance of the reader, expressed a wish to have some conversation with him; and Mr. Desmond called the man from the boghole. Mr. Stanley, like many others who are ignorant of the character of the Irish and of their desire to learn, had been incredulous as to the zeal and knowledge possessed by these poor men, and still more so of the disposition of the people to listen to them. He found, however, on conversing with the reader, that he was thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, showing by his references to various parts of the Scriptures how well he understood them, and frequently repeating at length the texts to which he alluded. But he always quoted them first in Irish, and then translated them into his own English. The strength of his literal version, added to the acuteness and vivacity of his remarks, greatly surprised Mr. Stanley, but not more than the extreme interest with which the workmen, who stood leaning on their spades, listened to the whole of this conversation.

At length Mr. Stanley unwillingly took leave of them when summoned by Mr. Desmond; for the day was far spent, and it was time, he said, to direct their steps homeward.

"What a very long bog this is!" said Evelyn, as they walked on.

"It is, indeed, as long as my history of bog formation, which has, I fear, added to your fatigue, my poor child, unused as you are to such long walks."

"No, indeed, papa, I am neither tired of the walk nor of any part of what you have been telling us. When I made that remark, I was thinking only what a variety of things I had learned in the course of our walk, and ——"

"I am sure I may say the same," said Mr. Stanley, "for I was perfectly ignorant about bog or moss, and turf as you call your fuel, both in theory and practice."

"There is one branch of the subject, however, which I have neglected till now," said Mr. Desmond, when, leading them over a bridge of hurdles, he took them into a field of potatoes: "I mean the reclaiming of bog, in which many have been very successful, either by draining, or by burning the surface, or by spreading gravel upon it, or by other processes, according to circumstances. This field of potatoes, and the two adjoining fields with those other promising crops in them, were all unprofitable boggy quagmire, yet are now, as you see, in full cultivation, yielding produce, and capable of bringing rent were I to let them. The potato, indeed, thrives particularly well in bog-earth."

"It is a pity," said Mr. Stanley, "that more bog is not reclaimed and made available for your starving poor."

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Mr. Desmond. "The country would be in every way improved—poverty would materially be diminished if the waste bogs were reclaimed; it would give steady employment to many of our poor who are now suffering from want of opportunity to earn their livelihood; and would give them more certain relief than the temporary assistance of the benevolent, as well as being a public advantage by increasing the productions of the country."

"But, why then," said Mr. Stanley, "do not the proprietors of those waste lands do as you have done here so successfully?"

"Because the outlay is considerable, and few have capital

to meet it; but if Ireland had steady assistance in that way, it would be of more essential service than any other measure for the relief of our poor, who would derive benefit, not only from the steady employment thus produced for them, but also from the additional quantity of land thrown into cultivation."

As Mr. Desmond said these words they crossed the little river which was the boundary between the bog and some of his cultivated fields, through which Mr. Desmond led them by a back approach to Clonallen House, where they were not sorry to sit down.

CHAPTER XVII.

Tierra del Fuego — Fungus — Food of the Fuegians and Irish — Effect of Climate — Talents of the Fuegians.

THE fatigue of the bog ramble was soon forgotten in the comforts of home, and in the pleasure of talking it all over again in the evening, and detailing their adventures and enjoyments to Mrs. Desmond; and, restored by early bed and the sound sleep of youth, they assembled round the breakfast-table next morning fresh in mind and body.

When breakfast was over, little Gerald, nitching himself in beside Mr. Stanley, stood there, patiently waiting till there was a silence, and then, looking up at him with the confidence which children feel in those whom they have discovered to be good-natured, he asked him to tell something more to him about *the fungus*.

“What fungus do you mean, my little man?”

“That fungus which you said some people eat instead of potatoes.”

“I could not have said instead of potatoes, for the people of Tierra del Fuego probably know nothing about them: I said that fungus is to the poor Fuegians what the potato is to the Irish—but not half so pleasant a food I am sure. Well, all I can tell you is, that it is the staple, that is, the established food of the natives; it is described as of a globular shape, bright yellow, the size of a small apple, and adhering in clusters to the bark of the evergreen beech-tree; it is considered as something of the nature of a morel. While young and moist the skin is elastic and smooth, very slightly marked with small circular pits. When cut in two the inside appears to consist of a white fleshy substance, which, if much magnified, seems to be a collection of threads, something like fine vermicelli. Close beneath the surface there are numerous little

balls, about a twelfth of an inch in breadth, which are filled with a transparent sticky matter; and, as the fungus grows old, the external skin opens, these balls are scattered about, and the surface then begins to look like a honeycomb; the whole fungus shrinks, and it is in this state eaten by the natives."

"Rather disagreeable food I should think; but pray, Sir, do they boil or roast it?"

"Neither; they eat it uncooked: it is slightly sweet, and smells somewhat like a mushroom."

"I suppose it is the miserable climate which prevents those poor creatures from cultivating any other food," said Evelyn.

"No: it is more from ignorance; for, being in a similar latitude to that of this country, the climate is tolerably mild. The mean temperature is indeed low, but the frosts are not so long or severe as ours; and our sailors, who remain sometimes for two or three years among the islands in the Strait of Magellan, for the purpose of collecting seal-skins, say that they wear the same clothing throughout the year. The humid though boisterous climate is favourable to vegetation, for the growth of the trees there is most luxuriant. Even the verbenas and fuchsias, which in this country are mere shrubs, were seen there by Captain P. P. King with large woody stems, and in full blossom, though close to a snowy mountain."

"But, Mr. Stanley, have they no other food?" said Gerald, who could form little idea of the miseries to which some nations of the earth seem to be condemned.

"No other vegetable food, except a few berries of a dwarf *arbutus*. They have, besides, shell-fish, for which the women dive, and a few small fish which they contrive to jerk out of the water with a hair line baited with limpets; these, with sea-birds' eggs, form their animal food; sometimes, indeed, they have in addition the luxury of a half-putrid whale or seal."

"Then I hope, Mr. Stanley," said Gerald, colouring, "I hope, Sir, you did not mean to compare our people to those miserable savages!"

"No, I assure you, my little friend, I did not mean to compare the people: I thought only of the great staple food of each; potato with you—fungus with them."

"But, Sir, there is one great difference, besides many others that I could—or at least I am sure papa could name."

"Well, my dear boy, what is that one great difference?"

"Why, Sir, I think these Fuegians take their chance for finding the fungus, but we prepare for the winter food by planting large crops of potatoes and then trying to the best of our power to preserve them; so that I am sure our poor people are forced to be industrious by the necessity of providing in spring for the future year."

"Very well reasoned, Gerald; that is all quite true. I assure you I am sensible of the exertions necessary to provide *your* staple food, and of its superior merit in every way. Nothing can be prettier than one of your large fields of potatoes in full bloom; and, when compared with the casual crops of Fuegian fungi, affords the strongest proof of the advantage of civilization, and, indeed, it also shows some connexion between a country and the character of its inhabitants."

"How so, Sir? Could it make any difference in me, for example, whether I live among these hills and bogs, or in the wild country of the Fuegians?"

"That is not the exact point of comparison, for your education has been such as to counteract many of the disadvantages of place. I alluded only to people altogether uncivilised and untaught. We see those who are ignorant of the arts of life drag on their existence, though often suffering dreadfully from the want of food, which they know not how to provide, and contented to live almost like the lower animals without covering; and this appears in a greater degree when from natural circumstances they are limited to nearly one barren and insulated spot, by which their intellect and activity are narrowed; whereas in general in wild and extensive regions, where the inhabitants are at liberty to roam about, and where their observation is enlivened by the chase, or by intercourse with other people, we see the mind more opened and the body more active."

"And all this is no doubt increased by severity of climate," said Mabel, who was interested in what her brother listened to with such attention.

"Climate appears to me to have similar effects on the

mind: a narrow sterile region must freeze the faculties and deaden them; and a close, damp, warm, tropical climate must have much the same influence by reducing man's power of exertion. This is, indeed, evident in the natives of those warm regions, except when excited by some powerful stimulus; while, on the other hand, the inhabitants of temperate climates are naturally inclined to exertion, and stimulated to it by their wants, which are increased by their active labours. Come now, my dear boy, we have said enough on this subject: you must not tire your mind."

"I think," said Mrs. Desmond, "we may say that, in proportion as circumstances enable us to increase the activity of our minds or bodies, and to enlarge our views, so much do our dispositions improve. Generosity and gratitude, truth and industry take the place of the grovelling, improvident, and filthy habits of the lowest order of savages."

"Yes," said Mr. Stanley, "and if we add to that the effects of education where religious principle and useful knowledge are fixed in the minds of youth, how much ought we not to expect the growth of every noble virtue in these civilised countries?"

"But I hope some effort has been made to civilise those poor Fuegians," said Evelyn.

"My benevolent and active-minded friend Captain Fitz-Roy," said Mr. Stanley, "did all that was in the power of an individual: he brought to England some of their young people, whom he endeavoured to educate while he remained ashore; when he returned to that station he restored them to their country, furnished with useful tools, and he hoped also with useful habits, but after a space of twelve months, when he again visited those barbarous shores, he had the mortification of finding that his instructions had been forgotten, and the objects of his generous care again brutalised."

"Are they too stupid to learn, or what was the cause of the failure?" asked Evelyn.

"They are by no means stupid," replied Mr. Stanley. "They are described as excellent mimics, and possessing such a good ear as to be able to repeat any English sentence at once completely. As an instance of their excellent ear and of

their powers of mimicry, I must tell you that I heard that, in the last visit of Sir James Ross to Cape Horn, an officer danced and sang 'Jim Crow' to a group of the Fuegians, one of whom instantly, to the great entertainment of the ship's crew, copied both dance and song, the first to perfection, and the last so well that he seemed to pronounce every word while he jumped Jim Crow! They are very inquisitive, and observant of small things, and I have no doubt that, if some of our good missionaries were to settle there and patiently and gradually lead them to the enjoyment of some easily attainable comforts, they would be influenced by their very habit of imitation to acquire a few simple arts, and from them would be led to higher knowledge. Everything that could be done for the education of Captain FitzRoy's Fuegians was done by him when they were in England; but just consider how often you succeed no better with your own people—how soon one or two who had seemed inclined to improve are forced by the tyrant taunts and irresistible ridicule of the many to return to the habits of their forefathers."

"What a life of exertion, and often, indeed, of continual fear, must be that of missionaries!" said Mrs. Desmond. "I honour them, for they sacrifice all the comforts of life, from a zealous desire to share the blessings of Christianity with the ignorant savage, who is often worse than ignorant—treacherous, unmanageable, and unwilling to open his eyes to truth. Indeed, missionaries are not sufficiently respected and assisted."

"The reason of that I apprehend to be that, to many of us, they appear to have made such small progress in disseminating knowledge and civilization," replied Mr. Stanley.

"Perhaps it may appear so," replied Mrs. Desmond, "looking at the great space of unchristianized country on the globe; and yet, follow them in their patient wanderings through each region, and you will find more or less fruit resulting from their labours."

"You were right in adding 'or less,' for I believe you will too often find them end in nothing," said Mr. Stanley.

"Oh! Mr. Stanley, do not say so: if you knew, as I do," said Mrs. Desmond, "the numbers of the Canadian Indians who have been made acquainted with Christian truth and

Christian habits of order and industry, you would change your opinion. Jones, a native of that country, having been well instructed and thoroughly grounded in Holy Scripture, has spread its blessings among his countrymen, and they show the effects in their orderly habits and regular attendance on public worship, and in their well-principled conduct; other natives have since become Christian teachers, and have, I believe, entered the church. I have had many interesting details of these distressed Indians from our friend Mrs. Manvers, who several years ago described to me a settlement of christianized Indians on Rice Lake, which she had visited."

"Such authority is 'more or less' satisfactory, I must acknowledge," replied Mr. Stanley; "and, when induced to recur to my old prejudices, I shall often think of your zealous defence of the missionaries. Indeed, so many of my prejudices have been conquered in this house, that I shall be considered a changed man when I get home."

"Take care, then," said Gerald, laughing, "that you are not like Captain FitzRoy's Fuegians, and return to your old ways in spite of papa and mamma."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Departure of Mr. Stanley — His Advice to Evelyn — Evelyn returns Home — Her Reception of Mrs. Manvers — Visit from a Tenant.

To Evelyn's great regret, the day of Mr. Stanley's departure arrived; though less painful than it would have been while she was yet a stranger in her father's family, still she felt deeply at being separated from a friend she had known so long, and to whom, as her guardian, she could apply in every difficulty.

Before he set out, Evelyn and he had a short walk in the garden, during which he expressed his gratification at seeing the improvement in her manner to Mrs. Desmond, and his hopes that she might soon be reconciled to the idea of her as a mother, adding, that she had less reason to feel it painful, as she had never had the happiness of knowing her own mother.

"I am glad, indeed," he continued, "to see that justice and good sense have overcome childish prejudice. But there is one thing besides that should influence all your feelings and actions; which, in short, my dear Evelyn, ought to be the guide of your everyday life: I mean that principle which we learn in the Gospel, of consideration for others—of forbearance towards all—that self-control, that humble idea of self, and disregard of self, which the Gospel alone teaches. Let that be your rule. Study it—give your heart to the study, and your motives will spring from that—the best source. Your feelings will be influenced by the beautiful precepts of that divine code, and pride and selfishness will yield to the spirit of benevolence—of Christian charity—that it inculcates."

"I will endeavour to conquer my pride," she mildly re-

plied. Indeed, I have no reason for discontent. Mrs. Desmond is kind and encouraging; I see that she is really amiable; and I feel so happy here with my father and Mabel and my little brother, that I shall be sorry to leave them and return to my gloomy castle, even though I am mistress there, and though I feel only as a child here."

"Yes, such is the waywardness of human nature, we are never quite satisfied," replied Mr. Stanley; "what we wish for we cease to value when obtained.—

The victor sees his fairy gold
Transform'd, when won, to drossy mould;
But still the vanquish'd mourns his loss,
And rues as gold that glittering dross!

You were unwilling to leave your castle—now you have no inclination to return to it. The only chance of preserving a steady course through life is by making our pleasure subservient to our duty. Every individual has some duties which are imperative. You have more than most young ladies; for, besides your own Christian and moral obligations as to conduct, you have also to consider the influence of your example, and that you have in your power the happiness of many, since it has pleased Heaven, by placing you at the head of such an extensive property, to give you a wide field for benevolence and usefulness."

"Oh! yes, I feel that; and fear that I shall never do all that I ought," exclaimed Evelyn.

"Few who reflect can flatter themselves that they do all they ought; but all can endeavour; and those who have time and money at command have the greater power of fulfilling their duties. Let me suggest to you, Evelyn, to accustom yourself nightly to reflect on what you have done during the past day, and on those duties that are to be performed on the following day, and to apply continually to Him who influences the heart to give you a just perception of your duties and adequate strength to perform them. You will find your best comfort and support in applying for aid *through* him who felt the sorrows and knew the weakness of human nature. For occasional counsel you are fortunate in having such a father. Since Providence has decreed that you should thus early be

tried by prosperity and independence, may you come safely through the ordeal! May you be a faithful Christian, and cast no stain on the proud name of O'Brien!"

Evelyn's tears rolled down her cheeks as she listened to the parting advice of her guardian, which was spoken in a most affectionate and impressive manner. She tried to thank him, and assure him of her attention to his injunctions; and when he was gone she still remained for a long time musing at the window, lost in the recollection of her childhood and in reflections on the sudden change of her situation. At length she was roused by finding a little hand placed in hers, and, looking round, she saw Gerald, who had come from "mamma," to invite her to take a rambling walk to a pretty spot which they might all sketch; adding, that mamma had given up his lessons, that they might all have the pleasure of being with Evelyn for the rest of the morning.

"How kind she is!" exclaimed Evelyn. "I wish I were a child again, and to be always with you! Yes," added she, wiping her brightening eyes, "I shall be delighted to sketch along with you and Mrs. — I mean—with my mother."

No time was lost in preparation; the day was charming; the landscape sometimes bright, sometimes in shade, as the sun or the fitful clouds predominated. The mowers, just beginning to cut the rich meadows, enlivened the scene, while the labourers were the more diligent at their various occupations, in order to be ready for the harvest, as the corn-fields showed by their yellow-tinted green that they too would soon supply abundant work. Everything looked beautiful,—and the very changes of lights and shades made the day more suitable to Evelyn's mind, for, while she lamented the past, she was ready to enjoy the present, and to look with hope to the future.

The children had each their little sketch-book; all did their best, and even Gerald's attempts were good. Mabel had been taught by her mother the proper rules, and her perspective therefore was perfect, but she wanted decision. Evelyn had seldom attempted to apply the instruction she had received to sketching from nature; but her touch was

firm, and her quick eye almost compensated for her inattention to rules.

Mrs. Desmond's sketch was of course the most complete ; and when they exhibited their drawings in the evening to Mr. Desmond, he was delighted to see the whole party so much at ease and so happy together, enjoying their friendly competition free from cold formality or jealous restraint.

In a few days their pleasant and tranquil life was interrupted by a letter from Mrs. Manvers, naming the day for her arrival at Cromdarragh Castle. Mr. Desmond, therefore, judged it necessary for Evelyn to return home immediately in order to receive her. She begged that he would accompany her, and expressed an anxious desire to have a visit from her mother and the children ; but Mrs. Desmond thought it more judicious to reserve her visit for another time, and to allow Mrs. Manvers a sufficient opportunity to become acquainted with the disposition of her young charge.

Poor Jane, who had felt very lonely during the lengthened absence of her little mistress, from whom she had never before been separated, was in great joy not only at her return, but at finding she had been so happy while with her father and his family ; and she began immediately in high good humour to assist in preparing apartments for Mrs. Manvers, though it sometimes occurred to her that she and her young lady might have lived very comfortably without any other duenna than the old housekeeper. The same idea was unfortunately too predominant in Evelyn's mind, who would willingly have dispensed with obedience to that part of her good grandfather's will : to be under the control of a stranger was, she thought, rather too great an infliction on her.

Mrs. Manvers, on her part, though willing to obey the wishes of her uncle, Sir Connor O'Brien, to whom she was attached by affection and gratitude, and sensible of the high proof of his esteem shown in selecting her for the care of Evelyn—and though conscious of the advantage it might be in her limited circumstances—had rather unwillingly accepted the responsible office for which she had been named. She had heard an exaggerated account of all poor Evelyn's faults, and

dreaded the self-will and conceit of a spoiled child and proud heiress.

Such were the feelings under which they were to meet ; and as Mrs. Manvers drove up to the castle, Mr. Desmond observed that Evelyn, who had been all gaiety and brightness but a minute before, became grave and stiff ; there was a proud frigidity in the reception of her cousin which he had not expected, and which evidently added an expression of disappointment to the pensive countenance of poor Mrs. Manvers, who regretted bitterly that she had not adhered to her original and strong conviction that poverty with independence was preferable to all the comforts she might enjoy while under the roof of the haughty, ice-like Evelyn.

Cold as her reception of Mrs. Manvers was, Evelyn had, however, too much good nature to omit any of the hospitable attentions due to a guest ; and though conversation made but little progress unless her father took part in it, Evelyn perceived, when Mrs. Manvers did speak, that her voice was soft, and her expressions refined. They retired early to bed ; and the next morning Mr. Desmond hoped that all would go on more cheerfully ; but each of his companions seemed unconquerably silent. At last, having tried in vain to draw them into conversation, he determined to try what effect his own silence might produce.

After some time, Evelyn, seeing her father smile, inquired what he was musing upon.

"I was thinking," replied he, "of a diverting Chinese anecdote which I heard lately."

"Pray tell it to me, papa !"

"I will ; but it is not a recent one. A Chinese envoy was sent from Amoy to Batavia in 1620, respecting some commercial privileges that the Dutch ships had claimed. He was introduced to the Governor, whose name was Jan Pieter Coën, and, when the customary bows and obeisances were over, he took his seat ; but from fear that he might give some advantage to the Dutchman if he were to open the business injudiciously, and in hopes also of penetrating the views of the latter by forcing him to begin the negotiation, he determined to remain silent, and even motionless. Jan Pieter, perceiving

the game he was playing, resolved to be equally cautious; neither spoke a word or moved a joint till sunset, when the Chinaman, vexed at being foiled at his own weapons, and conscious that he must be foiled in any discussion with such a phlegmatic adversary, walked out, embarked, and returned to Amoy, where he advised the government to send some one in his room more cunning than he had been."

Mrs. Manvers smiled at the anecdote, and made no remark; but Evelyn felt its point, and, partly vexed and partly ashamed, rose suddenly and left the room.

Mr. Desmond, perceiving how much Evelyn's manner had disappointed Mrs. Manvers and depressed her spirits, was anxious to make her understand the real disposition of his daughter, and took that opportunity of saying, "You must recollect that she was the darling of her grandfather, whose only object was her happiness, or rather her indulgence. She has been so little accustomed to control, that she naturally fears it now, and is always disposed to resist. But she is ingenuous, her reason is easily convinced, and I think her heart is quickly sensible to kindness."

"But she seems so very cold, and so reserved," said Mrs. Manvers.

"No, no; you will find she is not so cold; give her time and means to know you; let her feel that you consider yourself as her friend and companion only, and not as her governess; she will then be at ease with you, cheerful and candid; her self-will I foresee will diminish in proportion as, without seeming to oppose, you regulate her views by gentle reasoning, and gratify her feelings by your ready sympathy."

"I confess," replied Mrs. Manvers, "that I do much regret having accepted a trust to which I now feel myself wholly unsuited. Nothing could have induced me but my desire to comply with my good uncle's wishes, and, indeed, my strong attachment to Evelyn's mother."

"Let those motives then, my dear Madam, induce you to bear with my child's little faults with somewhat of that mother's patience, and, for that dear mother's sake, to preserve her from the dangers to which she is exposed. I need scarcely

tell you what pain it is to me not to have this dear child living with me; but circumstances, most of which you well know, and the unexpected death of her grandfather, have rendered her position one of great difficulty to me. With your aid I have strong hopes of success. The distance between this and Clonallen will be advantageous in giving apparent independence to her actions; but I shall consider her now to be the very first object of all my duties."

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Evelyn. Tears were still in her eyes, but her countenance was brightened by a smile, in which there was marked determination, and, going immediately to Mrs. Manvers, asked her in a low but courteous tone if she would like a walk. Mrs. Manvers accepted the invitation; and when Evelyn turned to her father to beg him to come also, he gave her such a look of fond approbation, that she felt already rewarded for her conquest over herself, and encouraged to continue her exertions.

"This garden is quite a wilderness!" exclaimed Evelyn. "I must set about altering it immediately."

"This season is too hot for making any changes yet," Mrs. Manvers replied; "but I am glad to see such a variety of American shrubs; I admire them so much, and some of these are really fine specimens; yet they are nothing to the size I have seen them attain in their native woods."

"Have you been, indeed, in America, and for any time?" said Evelyn.

"Yes; I have travelled through a part of the United States; and I resided in Canada for some years."

"Oh! I shall like so much to hear you relate your adventures; for I am sure, travelling in such a distant country, you must have met with some!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"If Mrs. Manvers is so kind," said Mr. Desmond, "as to tell you any passages of her life, you will, I know, be greatly interested by them."

"You know her life then, papa?"

"Only some parts of it; for it has been much chequered." Their walk was interrupted by a servant, who said that Mr. and Mrs. Ennis had come to wait on Evelyn.

"Visitors! The first I have had in my own castle. Papa,

will you help me to receive them? but first, pray tell me what sort of people they are."

"Personally I am little acquainted with Mr. Ennis," said he; "but I know his character,—he is one of your principal tenants. They are very worthy people, with a large family, whom they are bringing up well; and, though not exactly belonging to our own class, are entitled to every mark of civility and kindness, but, pray take notice, not that sort of kindness which appears like condescension."

Evelyn found her visitors in the drawing-room; they were accompanied by a blooming little girl, whom Mrs. Ennis said was ambitious of seeing the mistress of a castle, while they were paying their respects to her. Evelyn was so determined to be civil, that she took rather too much pains to please; but her goodnatured animated countenance, the interest she seemed to take in Ireland, and her evident habits of observation, all won Mr. Ennis.

Finding in the course of conversation that she had never seen a sheep-shearing, he invited her to come the next day to be present at his; adding that, as there were few sheep-farms in their neighbourhood, he hoped she would not lose the opportunity, which he could not have offered her now, so far advanced was the summer, but that he had been ill, and unable till now to superintend the business himself.

"And now," said Mrs. Ennis, "it will be a day of real rejoicing to all our family, as his health has been so graciously restored. My children are to have a piper and a syllabub to celebrate it completely; and if you, Miss O'Brien, will condescend to join us in such homely pleasures, we shall be most happy to see you and your friend and Mr. Desmond."

Evelyn was charmed at the idea; but turned to her father with a hesitating look, as if fearful of forgetting her dignity in her wish for the amusement proposed to her.

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Desmond, "let us accept Mr. Ennis's hospitable invitation by all means, if Mrs. Manvers feels herself well enough to accompany us. You ought to be acquainted with all our rural pleasures."

"I wish Mabel and Gerald could be along with us. Could we not send for them, papa?"

"No, my dear, there is not time now, for Mr. Ennis will begin early, before the freshness of the morning is spoiled by the heat of the sun."

Evelyn had been so much accustomed to indulgence, that she imagined it was no very great demand upon the compliance of one of her own tenants to ask Mr. Ennis if he could not be so kind as to defer the sheep-shearing to another day; and she felt rather mortified when, smiling at her proposal, he declared it impossible, as the sheep had been washed that very day, and must of course be shorn on the following morning.

"Washed!" exclaimed she. "Do you really mean washed?"

"Yes," he replied; "they are driven into the river, where men standing in the stream scrub their heavy fleeces, so as to wash away much of the dirt that has long been gathering, as well as to render the work more easy; just as grass is more easily mowed when it has been wetted by rain or heavy dew."

"Yes," said Evelyn; "I remember that it was always after rain that the little green lawn at the back of my grandfather's house was mown."

"Just so, my dear young lady," said Mr. Ennis; "and therefore I cannot, you see, comply with your wish; and, indeed, as it is, I am later than all my neighbours. Next year I will give you timely notice, for I should be proud to see Mr. Desmond's family at my place; though probably a sheep-shearing would be no novelty to them. But yourself and party I hope we shall have the honour of seeing to-morrow before ten. I do not name the time at which I shall begin, as that will be very early; but my flock is large, and the business will not be finished till late. Good day, ladies; good day, Mr. Desmond.—Come, Mrs. Ennis, we must be going.—To-morrow then, before ten, Miss O'Brien."

This visit was of use to both Evelyn and Mrs. Manvers; they seemed to have become better acquainted, as if thrown back on each other by the presence of strangers. Evelyn's manners during the evening were less cold and reserved towards Mrs. Manvers, who on her part looked less melancholy, and they conversed a little about a book with which Mr. Desmond tried to amuse them.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Sheep-shearing — Difference between Wool and Hair — Wool of various kinds of Sheep — The Dance — The Cashmere Goat.

THE morning of the sheep-shearing was bright and calm and warm—a day exactly suited to such rural occupations and to their enjoyment. A path across very pretty fields, which Evelyn had yet scarcely seen, and through a long grove of beech, which her grandfather had planted to screen those fields, led to a clear little rivulet with flowery banks; over it was a rude bridge made of hurdles, by which they immediately entered on Mr. Ennis's land; and then a well-mowed grass-walk brought them through a shrubbery and up a sloping bank to the house, where Mrs. Ennis received Evelyn with the kindness and respect due from a tenant, but quite distinct from fawning servility.

"We thought you would come this way, Miss O'Brien," said Mrs. Ennis, "and we guessed rightly that you would prefer a walk through the fields instead of driving this charming morning; but I hope you are not over-heated. Pray walk into the house and rest."

"On! no, no! Let us go at once to the sheep; we may rest afterwards," said Evelyn, with her usual ardour about everything new to her. The party was conducted through the farm-yard to an adjoining field. The various sounds of children's voices, the call of the lambs, the bleating of sheep, and even the bagpipes, were heard before they reached the nice little spot where, shaded by a stately grove of ash-trees, sat Mr. Ennis, superintending the shearing of his numerous flock; and among the many assembled about him was a blind piper, who from time to time enlivened the scene by a tune on the bagpipes. The unshorn animals were collected together in large pens, from whence they were led in turn to

those "who whet the sounding shears," and who skilfully contrive to hold the struggling creature within their grasp, managing dexterously to turn it from side to side, and to cut off the wool so smoothly and so rapidly, that Evelyn was astonished, every time she saw the shears close, that the poor animal was not wounded. She was shocked too at the force with which the shearers seemed to throw down each sheep, in order to gain power over it; and, again, when the poor creatures struggled, she was continually exclaiming "Oh! you will hurt it. Oh! stop, stop; its legs will be broken!" The shearers smiled and shook their heads, saying, "Never fear, Miss;" and Mr. Ennis, repeatedly assuring her that the sheep were in no danger, her anxiety was at last calmed. But she was again distressed on observing that each sheep was led, as soon as its fleece was removed, to a sheltered spot near the wall, where there was a turf fire, on which stood a huge iron pot, containing, as Mr. Ennis informed her, melted tar. A large iron cipher of G. E., fastened to a long handle, being then dipped in the hot fluid, was quickly pressed on the side of the poor new-shorn creature, which when thus branded was set at liberty, and joyfully bounded away to its companions in the field.

"How exact is the poet's description," said Mrs. Manvers—

"Meantime the joyous task goes on apace:
Some mingling stir the melted tar; and some
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side
To stamp his master's cipher ready stand."

"Yes, it is indeed most exact," cried Evelyn. "I never knew till now how truly the whole scene of the sheep-shearing is painted by Thomson; do pray repeat some more!" At her request Mrs. Manvers continued:—

"Behold where, bound and of its robe bereft
By needy Man, that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient, the mild creature lies!
What softness in its melancholy face,
What dumb complaining innocence appears!
Fear not, you gentle tribes, 'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you waved;
No, 'tis the tender swain's well-guided shears,

Who, having now, to pay his annual care,
Borrow'd your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again."

"Thank you, Mrs. Manvers; charming indeed it is, and your soft voice adds to its beauty. I have read Thomson—some parts several times—other parts I did not like quite so much; I suppose because I had never observed the scenes that he describes."

Evelyn then walked about with her father, going from one shearer to another, and interested by everything she saw. Observing the peculiar softness and silkiness of the inside wool of each fleece, she asked him in what way wool differed from hair except in its being finer and very much curled?

"That is a question which I cannot answer from my own observation; but I will tell you what I heard stated some time ago in a lecture by a scientific friend on that subject. He referred to the discoveries of Dr. Elbe, a German naturalist, who asserted that by means of a powerful solar microscope he perceived that the separate little filaments of which the thread of wool consists are twisted and matted together in all directions. The thread is irregular in thickness, sometimes swelled out, with an almost knotty appearance, and containing in the middle a transparent canal which appears quite distinct from the substance of the outside. The various proportions these parts bear to each other form the chief difference between fine and coarse wool."

"It is difficult to imagine a canal in so small a substance," said Evelyn.

"It is, my dear; I have tried to trace it myself with the best microscope to which I had access, but I have not been able to distinguish this minute formation. That canal is said to be divided into separate spaces, or cells, which in merino wool are at regular intervals, though not in common wool."

"It is very astonishing to see such distinct formation in such a small space!"

"It is indeed, Evelyn; the minuteness of the component parts of substances which appear perfectly simple till magnified is most curious, and gives a field for perpetual microscopical examination; for instance, it has been discovered that

in merino wool each little fibre of which it is composed appears like a ribbon with serrated edges ; and certainly in common wool I have with my own microscope distinguished very minute serratures on the outside of the thread."

While Mr. Desmond was thus speaking to his daughter on the nature of wool, a little circle gradually assembled round him. Mr. Ennis above all listened attentively to the particulars that he detailed ; and when there was a convenient pause, he said—

"There are some curious things in regard to wool that everybody does not know, though I dare say you do, Mr. Desmond. I mean the vast difference in the wool of different breeds of sheep. For instance, the wool of the Lincolnshire breed is always curly, while, on the other hand, those of Northumberland have quite straight wool ; it is remarkable, because there is on that account a difference in the articles manufactured from each. And now, Sir," pointing as he spoke to a separate pen of Shetland sheep, evidently quite different from the others, "what do you think of them, Mr. Desmond?"

"I cannot form a judgment on a subject of which I feel myself so ignorant," replied he ; "but I am well aware that the wool of the Shetland sheep is remarkably even and fine, and that much attention has in consequence been paid to that breed of sheep ; and I have observed its fine quality in those soft Shetland shawls which are now so fashionable, and are so light and warm."

"But, papa, you have not yet mentioned in what respect hair differs from wool."

"I will now tell you, my dear, what I have learned in regard to that—from the same authority to which I have already alluded. You recollect that I said the filaments which form the thread of wool appear all matted together ; but in the hair the little fibres lie parallel to each other, so that the entire hair may be said to consist of a bundle of fine fibres placed lengthways. These are continued from the bottom of the hair-bud, or root, to the end of the hair itself."

"It is wonderful that a fine hair, itself like a fibre, should contain others," said Evelyn.

"It is so," replied her father; "but what think you of its containing thousands of those fine filaments? Such at least is the calculation of those who have devoted more of their time than I have been able to do to the use of the microscope and to the delicate dissection of minute objects."

"Well," said Mr. Ennis, "I make no doubt of the correctness of those learned gentlemen; but all I say is this—that it is lucky for those who have wool to sell, and for those also who want good warm clothing, that the manufacturers have good practical rules for valuing the wool without being obliged to count the number of fibres in each fleece before they put them in the loom. Now, Sir, just look at that handsome snow-white fleece so full and so heavy; is it not a beautiful thing as it is, without any of your microscopes or magnifying glasses? and when all those sheep, still in the pen, are shorn, and the wool collected in large bags, it is then, Miss O'Brien, I feel happy, for, no matter how many fibres or filaments they contain, or even whether the price be high or low, I am contented, for sure I am such a quantity will supply me with at least my half-year's rent for my *landlord*—Heaven bless her!" bowing low to Evelyn as he spoke.

The little Ennises, who had from time to time ventured to bring wild flowers to Evelyn and to tell her about their pet rabbits and birds, and were now beginning to tire of watching the sheep, one after another "of their robe bereft," asked Evelyn to come into the grove, where they were going to dance. Mrs. Manvers and she willingly complied, and were highly amused at seeing the children clustering round the piper, who played a favourite tune, to which they danced for some time with the true Irish spirit. Evelyn enjoyed it so much that she wished to take part in it, and asked one of Mr. Ennis's little daughters to teach her the jig steps; and delighted all the little set by quickly catching them up, dancing with the animation natural at her age, and humouring the tune, as they said, by the changes in her air and manner: Mrs. Manvers, who was yet but little acquainted with her real character, looked on with surprise at the childish gaiety and playfulness of the same little girl who the day before had been all cold and haughty formality. She sat on a rustic bench, under an

old spreading white-thorn, and while she was thus observing the happy party of children dancing with innocent glee, and Mr. Ennis's contented countenance, as the shearers, hastily clipping them off, added fleece after fleece to the rich heaps piled up behind him, her thoughts went back to the scenes of her own youth—to those joyous times when, young in experience, she wished for no greater pleasure than that of spending the long summer-day at the sheep-shearing of a maternal uncle who lived in the rich plains of Leinster. She pictured to herself those happy times till she almost beheld her venerable uncle; and tears, at the recollection of the time she was so dear to him, flowed unrepressed because as she thought unobserved. But Evelyn just then coming to ask for a pin to fasten up her frock, which had been torn, surprised her in thus giving way to the painful but gratifying enjoyment of times long gone by. Startled at Mrs. Manvers' tears, she pressed her to say if she was ill or tired, offering to go home that instant if she wished, but her mind was soon set at ease by Mrs. Manvers' assurance that she was enjoying old recollections of forty years back, when everything was fresh to her and full of happiness.

"Forty years!" exclaimed Evelyn; "I should like to hear about that time—it must have been very interesting to be so long remembered."

"Yes," Mrs. Manvers said; "an interval of so many years hallows, but does not lessen, the impression made by old and touching associations. Those times were deeply interesting to me; but let us not talk of them now—some other day perhaps."

Evelyn thanked her; she had half turned away to join the dance again, but a new train of feelings was awakened by the few words which had escaped from Mrs. Manvers, and she willingly obeyed her father's summons to look at the making up of the woolpacks.

A large bag of strong linen was hung between two tall posts, into this the fleeces were thrown by a man on a step-ladder, and, when as full as it could be stuffed, he sewed the top with a strong cord, and also bound another round each corner of the bag, so as to make a little lump there which served to distin-

guish it. When thus completed the woolpack was let down from the posts, with a loud huzza from all the people. Another bag being suspended for a similar purpose, Mrs. Ennis took the opportunity to ask Evelyn to come and rest in the house, instead of waiting to see all finished. Mrs. Manvers and the youthful party followed into a neat parlour, where refreshments had been prepared. A cow was then driven to the grass-plot before the windows to be milked; and the pleasures of the day were crowned by Evelyn's seeing a syllabub made, and partaking of it. Mr. Ennis joined the little party as soon as his woolpacks were deposited in his storehouse, and the shearers summoned to their supper; and he declared it was one of his proudest days to see such company in his house, adding, that he well remembered having seen Mrs. Manvers several years before, at Cromdarragh Castle, on a visit to Sir Connor O'Brien.

It was now time to go home: Mr. Ennis, in assisting Mrs. Manvers to put on her shawl, exclaimed, "Oh, Madam, what a fine substance! Here is wool indeed, very different from even our best merino. May I ask where this comes from?"

"It is Indian," replied Mrs. Manvers; "made of the wool of the Cashmere goat."

"Oh! then there is an end indeed of our old proverb about the folly of going to the goat's house to look for wool! But after all, perhaps, Mrs. Manvers, you are only putting a quiz upon me!" said Mr. Ennis.

"No, I assure you, it is a fact well known to Eastern travellers. Beneath the hair of the Cashmere goat this fine wool lies concealed. A friend of mine, who had visited the region from whence that wool is procured, informed me that the long hair of the goat is first cut short with a knife in the direction of the growth—I mean from the head towards the tail; and then, a coarse sort of comb being passed in the opposite direction, it brings away the fine wool unmixed with hair. It is a curious fact that, when warm weather sets in, the delicate woolly clothing of those mountain animals, being no longer requisite, becomes loose, and is easily removed; and the heat it produces is so inconvenient to the goats that they absolutely rub themselves with their horns, or against trees, or roll on the

ground, to relieve themselves of what is so indispensable to them in winter."

"It is wonderful," said Mr. Ennis, "how much we may learn from the well informed; but travellers sometimes tell strange tales that seem almost incredible, and I have been told that they describe the sheep of other countries as very unlike ours indeed."

"Yes," replied Mr. Desmond; "there are some kinds certainly which differ in many respects from those with which we are acquainted; for instance, the Thibet sheep, which are taller and stouter than ours, and are used for carrying loads into India from Thibet."

"Surprising, indeed, Sir!"

"And I read lately of a very remarkable species found in Abyssinia, covered with long black hair touching the ground; of this large shawls are made by the inhabitants, who find them very useful, as the nights in that country are remarkably cold. The people take the greatest care of this animal, and even wash it daily."

"Well, well! it is but to live and learn: I thank you heartily for the information you have given me. There is nothing like knowledge, Sir; every day proves to me that it is an advantage in all situations to get as much as we can. 'Knowledge is no burden'—a good proverb, which I often repeat to my children—and I am anxious, therefore, to give them a good education. The conversation of well-informed people confirms what I am always saying to my boys, that good principles and education will be of forty times more use to them than all the ponies now, and hounds and hunters hereafter, can ever be. But I see the ladies are preparing to take leave of us; I wish you a pleasant walk home, and beg once more to assure you, Miss O'Brien, that I feel very much your kindness in having honoured us with a visit."

Evelyn thanked Mr. Ennis gracefully, and, smiling kindly as she turned towards Mrs. Ennis and the children, said she had spent a most agreeable day, and that she should always feel grateful to Mr. Ennis for having given her the pleasure of seeing a sheep-shearing.

CHAPTER XX.

On Conversation — Mr. Desmond departs — National Music — Irish — Scotch — Resemblance of Spanish and Irish Music — Kurd Music — Ker Porter — Aileen a Roon.

THE sheep-shearing produced a happy effect on Evelyn, for she had perceived that the usually grave and pensive countenance of Mrs. Manvers could occasionally relax into an indulgent smile of sympathy with the gaiety of youth. Recollecting that her beloved grandfather had appointed Mrs. Manvers in consequence of her misfortunes to her present office, Evelyn began to be conscious that her cold haughtiness was not only unfeeling to a person dependent on her, but disobedient to the wishes of one whose memory she so gratefully cherished ; and, resolving therefore to lay it aside, she met Mrs. Manvers the next morning with much less disdainful reserve, though not yet with the warmth and kindness natural to her disposition when unclouded by pride.

Her father was to return home that day, to her great regret, and in their last walk together after breakfast she expressed to him her consciousness of her own waywardness in regard to Mrs. Manvers, declaring her resolution to behave with more kindness to her.

"Very right, my dear Evelyn," said he, "but let your kindness and politeness be such as spring from the heart ; let it not be mere artificial politeness without benevolence. Recollect that true politeness is founded on the golden rule— 'Do as you would be done by ;' and also that it is the character of youth to be open and unreserved ; and then your attentions will flow not only from conviction, but from your own good feeling. Consider Mrs. Manvers as your near relation, and that while here her happiness must in a great measure depend on you. She has quitted all for you, and if she be miserable

no weak excuses will release your conscience from the recollection of unkindness and ingratitude to her."

"I will try, dear papa, not to cause her any unhappiness, but as a companion she is so much older and graver than I am, that I do not know how I can be at ease with her."

"My dear Evelyn, Mrs. Manvers is not so very aged as you would imply; her mind is still flexible, her body active, she is free from any of the infirmities which mark the decline of life; and you must allow that there is no appearance of severity in her manner or her opinions. But tell me, why should not you, though young, try to converse with the aged? Is it not a very inconsistent weakness of the youthful to avoid the society of those whose experience and observation may convey instruction as well as entertainment? Why not converse with her as with me?"

Mr. Desmond paused, and they walked in silence, for he was unwilling to say too much, however anxiously he wished to make some impression on his daughter's mind.

After some minutes, with a hesitating voice, she observed that it is very difficult to find conversation for old people, adding "who are not dear friends like you."

"Do you not know, Evelyn," he replied, "that to be able to converse with strangers is a proof of that good breeding which enables persons, however different their pursuits and habits, to mix with ease in society and make use of the general knowledge which is the result of a good education?"

"Yes, papa, but that requires an effort; and as I cannot be supposed to feel any *love* for Mrs. Manvers, and as I do not much like her, why should I give myself so much unnecessary trouble?"

"Loving or liking her, Evelyn, is not the question: you have been thrown into a close connexion with her by the same will that threw this noble property into your hands: in accepting the one you cannot refuse the other; and, thus situated, it appears to me that common sense, quite independently of what you owe to your grandfather's desire, would lead you to study her character before you give way to your likes or dislikes; and that common good nature would induce you to see whether there may not be some amiable and agreeable points

about her which you might condescend to cultivate for your own sake if not for hers."

"I cannot deny that, my dear papa; but then I am sure you will admit that to a person with such a grave and melancholy countenance I cannot talk as fluently and familiarly as to one of my own age."

"Yes, I allow it is natural that you should feel some diffidence in conversing with those who are much older and wiser than yourself, but I hope that all grave subjects are not disagreeable to you. As to her melancholy air, much of it is in your power to remove."

"In conversing with older people I feel, papa, that my own ignorance produces another difficulty."

"Then, my dear child, make use of the opportunity to learn. But I think the difficulty of which you speak more frequently arises from want of attention than from ignorance. Young people, of inquiring minds like you, read on a great variety of subjects, from which they might acquire much substantial knowledge if they had the habit of classifying the facts thus collected: and nothing strengthens so much the power of doing this as conversation. To impart our ideas we are obliged to make some arrangement of them,—that is to say, we class them according to the point of view in which we desire to bring them to the notice of other persons, or in which we propose to compare them with the ideas they have expressed. This habit of arrangement has other advantages: besides supplying us with materials for rational conversation, it enables us, when listening to those who are older and better informed than ourselves, at once to appreciate and apply what drops from them. But it is time for me to be gone."

"What shall I do without you, papa? Oh, how I wish you could stay with me," said Evelyn; "Mrs. Manvers will be so very"—

"So very agreeable and kind, Evelyn, that you will soon value her as a companion, if you make yourself agreeable and kind to her. Much will depend on yourself. Remember that it is generally by our own temper that our happiness is either made or marred. Adieu! my dear child; you have a wide field for action in this place, where improvement is requisite

both within and without, so that you can never want occupation of either mind or body ; and I am sure you will find Mrs. Manvers something more than an agreeable companion,—a very useful assistant.”

“A very useful assistant,” repeated Evelyn to herself after his departure ; “useful ! very likely ; but I do not want a companion of more than three times my own age ! My father thinks otherwise ; but he does not know me yet—and I can assure him I am quite able to amuse myself—and I am determined to do so. Poor Mrs. Manvers companionable indeed !”

But this return to her foolish thoughts, so inconsistent with the resolutions she had made an hour before, was suspended by the sudden recollection that she could now have the relaxation of music, at all times a favourite occupation, and which would be particularly welcome in her present situation. Her grand pianoforte had arrived, and had just been put in order after its voyage and journey, and she now flew to the drawing-room where it stood, and hastily opening it touched the keys with the delight one feels at meeting an old friend. Her hands as it were involuntarily played the sweet air of ‘*The Old Woods of Truagh.*’ How truly Cowper expresses the effect of music :—

“Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touch’d within us, and the heart responds.”

Her grandfather, whose last gift had been that instrument, seemed almost present to her, and her heart was at once filled with tender recollections. That song had been one of his favourites—she remembered with painful pleasure how much, when suffering, he was soothed by the plaintive music of his own country : and such was its power over Evelyn at this moment, that her discontent and proud perverseness all subsided as she dwelt upon the airs which he had loved.

She had just uttered with great feeling the last note of “If to a foreign clime you go,” when, looking by chance at Mrs. Manvers, who had not been in her thoughts for a long time, she perceived that her eyes were full—and fixed upon her. After a pause Mrs. Manvers said, as she endeavoured to stop a falling tear—

"That was the last song your dear mother ever sang to me; and you looked so like her, Evelyn, that it brought back many thoughts of times past, when we used to sing it together. Besides, the air is in itself touching—it goes to the heart."

"Indeed it does; I never before felt the effect so strongly. Grandpapa delighted in the music that recalled former times, and he used to make me sing that song so often, that I love it as much as you do; perhaps he too thought I looked like my mother when singing it."

"Very probably, my dear."

"But—I did not know that you were musical; I hope you will sing for me?"

"Willingly," replied Mrs. Manvers; "but I cannot to-day, my nerves are a little unstrung. However, my enjoyment of music is extreme; and you cannot indulge me more than by singing some of those sweet ballads of our own country, so dear to me as well as to the friends who are gone!"

"It will be a great pleasure to me to sing for one who feels them so much," replied Evelyn. "Does any other music interest you besides the Irish?"

"Oh! yes, certainly;—and, indeed, it is remarkable how easily the different styles of national music may be distinguished," said Mrs. Manvers.

"I have never attended very much to that subject," said Evelyn; "nor considered the styles peculiar to any other nations."

"The spirit of national music is an interesting study," said Mrs. Manvers; "I consider it in the same light as poetry; if the words and rhythm of the one are expressive of our feelings—so also are the tones of the other, whether grave or gay. The influence of martial strains, which incite the soldier to the most daring exploits, is a proof of what I mean."

"Oh! yes. I have felt a thrill at hearing military airs, though I know not why. I wish musical instructors would lead the minds of their pupils a little more to reflect upon the true character of music; it would help to form the taste much more than a mere mechanical method of teaching."

"Perhaps it might," replied Mrs. Manvers; "but the first object with the teacher—though it too is sometimes neglected

—should be, to give a thorough knowledge of the science ; and then they may direct or adapt it according to the pupil's disposition, which often in a great degree influences the taste."

"But does taste indeed depend on disposition?" said Evelyn. Then, after a short silence, "Now, tell me, Mrs. Manvers, what is your favourite kind of music?"

"Of all the different styles of national music," she replied, "none touches me so powerfully as the Irish: it may be partiality in me; but I think no music expresses the meaning so forcibly. And yet, I must say, there are some Scottish melodies which awaken the deepest feelings of my soul!"

"Do you not think," said Evelyn, "that there is a great resemblance in the music of these two nations?"

"Yes, in the general characteristics of each there certainly is; and some very sweet airs are common to both. It is possible that they were carried into Western Scotland in ancient times, when the Irish, or Scots as Bede calls them, formed settlements there, imparting the name of Scotia to that country, though they have since lost the name themselves."

"I am ready to share with the Scotch," remarked Evelyn, "in our music; but I am sure no other nation has any claim to it."

"I fear," said Mrs. Manvers, "that I must rob you of the pleasure of that idea, for there are several Spanish tunes, of which I have a good collection, which so much resemble the Irish, as to have been mistaken, when I played them, for our own national airs."

"I should like to hear some of them; but how comes it, Mrs. Manvers, that lively Spanish airs should resemble the plaintive Irish?"

"Because, though lively, they are in minor keys," replied Mrs. Manvers, "which gives that peculiar mixture of gaiety and pathos which forms one of the marked characteristics of our Irish music."

"But still I think the resemblance is extraordinary," said Evelyn.

"Not quite so extraordinary as would at first appear; for it is said that a large body of people from Spain came to

Ireland in former times; they may have brought that music with them; and as afterwards, you know, a close connexion certainly subsisted between the two countries, they may perhaps have acquired it from us.

"How agreeably surprised a traveller must be at hearing his own national airs, or even something like them, in a distant land!" said Evelyn.

"Ker Porter, in his entertaining 'Travels,' mentions a remarkable circumstance of that kind," said Mrs. Manvers. "When among the mountains of Kurdistan, benighted, and overtaken by a violent storm, and refused shelter in the village of Yeltomar, he and his companions gladly took refuge in a sort of half-cave, half-hut, already nearly filled with wandering mountaineers. Though rude in aspect, they charitably drew closer together to make room for the strangers near a fire of wood, which blazed at the upper end of the cavern. His description of these Asiatics, with the fire-light gleaming on their fierce countenances, and dressed in something like the tartan plaid, and entertaining him with their songs, is very interesting. One of these people afterwards produced a small pipe, similar in shape and tone to a flageolet, and played some beautiful airs, which strongly reminded the travellers of our Irish melodies, both in slowness of movement and tenderness of expression, and with that peculiarity of strain which seems to belong to the Irish lays. It was played with the utmost precision, the rest of those rude Kurds listening with the deepest interest, and their hard features relaxing into the expression of sympathy."

"What a remarkable proof," exclaimed Evelyn, "of the power of music; and how delightful to the travellers!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Manvers, "it was altogether a singular scene; and if the attention of the English travellers was not too much occupied by their own situation, it must have been a fine study to watch its power in gradually softening the wild countenances of those people."

"Oh! yes, Mrs. Manvers, and the flickering blaze which showed their features, and danced on their glittering arms, and then revealed the ruggedness of the cave. Would it not have been a scene for *Salvator Rosa*? But now, to go back

to Scottish music, pray mention some of the airs which you consider as belonging equally to both countries."

" 'Robin Adair' is one which I can give you as an example," replied Mrs. Manvers. "No true Scotchman would part with it; and yet our 'Aileen a Roon' is the same, but we think far more beautifully arranged."

"I know that air, it is one of my favourites," said Evelyn.

"I suppose, then, you know an interesting legend attached to it?" said Mrs. Manvers.

"No, indeed; but I should like much to hear it; for I am as fond of old legends as of old ballads.

"Two tribes," said Mrs. Manvers, "or rather septs, as they are called, had been long at feud—that is, bitter enemies to each other; notwithstanding which, the son and daughter of the two chieftains, having met, became attached, and, having made a solemn engagement to marry, no arguments that her father could urge had any effect in dissuading the young damsel from fulfilling her promise. At length, however, the lover was suddenly sent by the king upon some distant mission, which was to detain him away for a year; during which period another suitor, approved of by her father, offered himself; and after many struggles poor Aileen was forced to promise that, if her own lover did not return in a year, she would yield to her father's command."

"Ah! unfortunate Aileen!" exclaimed Evelyn; "her lover does not return in time; and she submits to her tyrant father! I know I would not!"

"In those remote times," returned Mrs. Manvers, "parents were rather absolute. But to continue: On the day which completed the year the old chieftain had resolved that the wedding should take place. Magnificent preparations had been made for its celebration, the company were collected, and dancing formed part of the amusement of the evening. After some time, Aileen, over-heated, went to an open window which looked directly on the sea, immediately over which stood the castle. She heard the distant sound of a harp, and, as a well-known melody came floating on the sea-breeze to her ears, she exclaimed that there was but one person who could so play that air. She still listened,—the sounds became

more distinct ; she perceived a boat nearing the castle, and soon recognised the figure of her lover. It came still nearer and nearer, till the boat was directly under the window, and her lover standing in it with outstretched arms. She boldly sprang from the window—was safely received—and, instantly rowing away, they were beyond the reach of pursuers before her father was aware of her flight. And from her that song has since been named ‘Aileen a Roon,’ which signifies *Aileen my darling*.”

“Thank you for that pretty tale,” Mrs. Manvers, “which does indeed give us a right to the air. I am so glad that you are fond of music ! I will play for you as much as you like ; and perhaps you will sometimes sing with me ; it would be very pleasant to have some mutual employment.”

“I shall be very glad to sing with you,” said Mrs. Manvers, “though sometimes when nervous my voice is weak ; it is, as you say, always desirable for those who live together to have some pursuit or interest in common. People then become really acquainted, and the old are often found companionable even by the young.”

Evelyn coloured as Mrs. Manvers spoke, conscious of having too hastily decided upon the impossibility of their being companions ; and Mrs. Manvers soon afterwards withdrew to her own apartments.

CHAPTER XXI.

Sunday — Suitable Employments — Subject for Scripture Search —
Scattered Predictions of Our Lord — The Promise to Abraham.

"I do not know how it is, but Sunday appears a much longer day here than it ever did at G——," said Evelyn, laying down a book of sermons she had been reading on Sunday afternoon.

"Did you spend the sabbath in a different manner there?" Mrs. Manvers asked.

"Not quite—yes—rather. You know the interval between breakfast and church was short, as the service begins there at eleven. And after service I frequently went with Violet Stanley to the Sunday-school, and then we afterwards sauntered in the garden, either together, or with grandpapa. We dined early: a part of the evening was passed at church, and the remainder was occupied with walking and with conversation—and bedtime soon came."

"And thus the day passed easily away," said Mrs. Manvers; "but what trace of it remained? Except attending public worship, which was very right, what else was there among your employments to mark *the day*?"

"Oh! I always read a sermon to myself in the morning, and another in the evening to grandpapa."

"Well, that too appears to have been very right so far; and I like good sermons very much; but still I think that something more is requisite for the proper employment of the sabbath."

"I know what you mean—the teaching at a Sunday-school: I did do so at G——, but there is no school near this, you know. I intend to establish one, and to teach as many as I can persuade to come, and then I suppose the day will not seem so long: but the want of evening service leaves a great blank."

"It does, certainly, to those who have been accustomed to it; but in the country, as here, for instance, where we cannot have it, could not we devise some useful substitute for passing the time?"

"To read more, I suppose? but when I read many sermons I forget them."

"No, I did not mean to advise the reading of more sermons; they are very useful to remind us of our duty and lead us to reflect; but though they may direct us rightly in the pursuit of knowledge, they do not always sufficiently engage our minds. I think you would sometimes find it an agreeable employment to search the Scriptures for corresponding texts on any given subject. Or else suppose you were to select some one object of inquiry, and then search the Scriptures for all the passages which can throw light upon it."

"Yes, I should like that very well if I should find any difficulty; but you know, Mrs. Manvers, that my grandpapa took care that I should be very well instructed, and that I should read the Bible constantly."

"That is very happy for you, my dear; but still, perhaps, you might in some small degree add to your own knowledge by the kind of research which I have taken the liberty of suggesting; and certainly, if you wish to give any religious instruction at your intended school, you will find it advantageous to be mistress of your subject."

"For that sort of teaching I should think that very moderate knowledge would be sufficient," said Evelyn, colouring and looking out of the window.

Mrs. Manvers took no notice of Evelyn's manner, but, sitting down at her writing-desk, began to make notes, apparently from the Bible, in a small blank book which lay on the table. Evelyn took up her sermon-book again, reading and looking out of the window by turns, and yawning from time to time. Her attention was weary, but she thought it would appear childish to stop. At length, becoming curious to know what occupied Mrs. Manvers so much, she forgot her sermon, and with the half-closed book in her hand sat for some time observing her attentively; then said, smiling and as if inclined to laugh, "You remind me, Mrs. Manvers, of the

little Stanleys; you seem hunting for texts and references just like those children!"

"I am engaged in something of that nature," she replied; "for though I have all my life endeavoured to study the Scriptures, I continually feel myself shamefully ignorant of them; and therefore, whenever a sermon that I have heard or read, or any other circumstance, makes me sensible of my deficiencies, I search for all the parallel passages or allusions."

"But cannot you find them in various books selected and arranged already, which would save you much trouble?"

"Yes, and I gladly avail myself of that assistance; but it is not the less necessary to examine each passage, and the context also, and to compare them with each other; and all this is not only a very interesting occupation, but impresses the subject on my memory far better than the mere perusal of any book of reference, however valuable in other respects."

"It must be very laborious," replied Evelyn, "and after all it is like what children do—at least some children, for my governess never asked me to do so."

"I am surprised that Mr. Stanley had not recommended that useful practice to you, and to his daughter Violet."

"He did sometimes speak of it; but I considered myself as too old for that sort of thing."

"Too far advanced?" asked Mrs. Manvers.

"Yes, I believe so," replied Evelyn, shrinking from the penetrating eye of Mrs. Manvers.

"I cannot be a judge of that, my dear; but I do think that such an employment would be very suitable to Sunday; and that possibly you might on examination find some parts of Scripture upon which you are not yet fully informed."

"What sort of examination do you mean?" said Evelyn.

"By selecting some one subject, and examining into your knowledge of the Bible with regard to it, you would easily discover whether you do know all that is to be found there on that subject, that is, if you search every place referred to in the margin."

"Do you think *my* researches could teach me much?" said Evelyn.

"Yes; if you read carefully you will find that Scripture is its own interpreter," replied Mrs. Manvers; "the same incidents and sentiments are sometimes repeated, and an obscure passage may be cleared up satisfactorily by comparing the parallel passages in the same or in its different books: the New Testament, for instance, is the best comment on the Old—of its *spirit* always, and frequently of the *letter*."

"Well, name some object of research or examination on which I might fix," said Evelyn.

"Suppose you were to search for those predictions of the Messiah which are scattered through the Old Testament; I do not mean the direct predictions in the Prophets regularly so called."

"Which then can you mean?" Evelyn asked.

"In the books of the Old Testament," replied Mrs. Manvers, "a great number of passages may be found which evidently relate to the Mediator who was appointed to appear in due time, and to whom prophetic allusion was made from time to time by the patriarchs of old. Several important predictions grew spontaneously out of the circumstances of the *history* of the Jews, and they mutually explain and illustrate each other."

Evelyn listened to Mrs. Manvers politely, but, soon resuming her book, said no more, and Mrs. Manvers, apparently intent on her own objects, urged the subject no farther.

The next morning at breakfast Evelyn said, "I have been thinking of what you said yesterday of the predictions to be found in the Old Testament, and, if it would not be troublesome to you to point out some, and guide me in the manner of finding and comparing them, I should be very much obliged to you."

Mrs. Manvers, agreeably surprised, not only at Evelyn's wishing for instruction, but also at finding that she was inclined to reflect on their conversations, assured her that nothing could please her more.

As soon as breakfast was over, Evelyn, who was always active about any new scheme, would have instantly begun her new pursuit; but she waited prudently till she had given her household directions, and had made her arrangements for the

day, the habit of doing which regularly at that time she had been very successfully endeavouring to acquire.

"Now, Mrs. Manvers, I am ready. Here is my Bible, and a little book I have made in order to note down all you say."

"Only to note down the connexion of texts, I hope, not my trifling words, my dear. The predictions of our Saviour begin early in the Scriptures: the first that we meet with it is scarcely necessary to point out, as you cannot but know the occasion of that important promise."

"The first—I do not recollect! Oh, yes, you mean that in Genesis iii. of the enmity between the seed of the woman and of the serpent? How did Adam and Eve perceive its real meaning?"

"It is impossible to ascertain now how far they understood the precise meaning of that declaration; but it is evident that it was intended to alleviate in some degree the horror they felt at the misery which their disobedience would inflict on their children, and that it was calculated to inspire them with some degree of hope and confidence. The effect of this promise upon our first parents and their children shows that they derived from it the expectation of a Redeemer who should raise them from the ruin of the fall; and that it probably laid the foundation of whatever religion there was in the world till the call of Abraham—that is, for two thousand years men were taught by it to look forward to some glorious deliverer, and to fix their faith and hope on Him."

"I suppose," said Evelyn, "that at the time the meaning of the sentence was more fully explained to them than it now appears to have been."

"No doubt it was," replied Mrs. Manvers. "Our first parents received this prophetic communication directly from their Creator, and their intellectual powers were probably the more bright and extensive in consequence of such an intercourse with the Almighty."

"I wonder that more particulars of that time are not told in the Bible," said Evelyn.

"It is considered by many learned men," said Mrs. Manvers, "that, in writing the history of the Creation and of those

early times, Moses only made a summary of what the Israelites knew more fully from tradition—that he gave merely a kind of outline to preserve the principal circumstances from the corruptions of history, and to assert the omnipotence of the Creator in opposition to the pagan mythology. Wherever we find allusion to that text of which we were speaking, it appears that the hope it was designed to raise was distinctly understood and felt by mankind. Adam immediately named his wife Eve, the mother of all *living*, because the Saviour, who was to restore us to immortal life, was to descend from her; and from that time till the Messiah actually appeared on earth, the conviction that such a person was to come in order to relieve us from the weight of sin was fixed in the mind of man, and has been traced throughout all the nations of the earth.”

“I do not perceive that there was any allusion in that text to the sacrifice which our Saviour was to offer of himself.”

“No; and that very circumstance is a corroboratory proof that its full meaning and extent was at the time clearly impressed on the minds of Adam and Eve, and was imparted by them to their descendants; for we see that the vicarious sacrifice of animal life was immediately instituted, and understood to be a type or representation of the one grand expiatory sacrifice which was to take place in the fulness of time for the sins of the world.”

“But still this enemy of mankind has not yet been conquered, though the great offering has been made.”

“True; as long as our imperfect human nature continues, we are exposed to temptation and the conflicts it produces; but we know to whom to apply for strengthening aid; we know that Christ will give us his support if we pray for it with a full faith, with all our hearts—that He has indeed obtained the victory—and that, although he still permits the struggle to continue between truth and error, between righteousness and sin, the time will come when all worldly power and all sin will be put down, when He will bruise the head of the serpent, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and He shall reign for ever!”

Evelyn examined for a few minutes some of the marginal references in the old family Bible ; then, turning to Mrs. Manvers, she exclaimed, " I cannot find any other texts that bear upon this one ; but I do already perceive how mistaken I was in saying I was well acquainted with the Scriptures. I see, even now, several passages which I had overlooked ! But why is there not some further reference here to the knowledge thus imparted to Adam and Eve ? "

" We learn from the Sacred History, which rapidly passes over hundreds of year, that the inhabitants of the world, forgetting Him who had made them, sank into wickedness, and must have been unfit to receive revelation of any kind ; and till the time when Abraham was called, we do not find any distinct reference to the great promise given to Adam. But when the Lord desired Abraham to leave his country and his kindred, assuring him that he would bless and make of him a great nation, it is then distinctly said, ' And in thee shall the families of the earth be blessed ; ' thus at once reminding him of the original promise, and withdrawing him from his connexions, that his favoured family, separated from all others, might be the depositories of Divine truth, the guardians of revelation. And though the declaration thus made to Abraham appeared to be of a temporal nature, it was understood then, and was afterwards always considered, as an intimation of a spiritual deliverer—so explicit a prophecy of the Messiah, indeed, that the expectation of Him became fixed in the minds of the Israelites for ever after—so full, as almost to proclaim the appointed way of acceptance through Him, and the extent of his salvation ; and thus was justification through faith preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, ' In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed. ' "

Mrs. Manvers closed the Bible as she said these words. Evelyn was disappointed ; her mind was now engaged by the subject, and she would have continued, but Mrs. Manvers assured her that it was better to do a small portion without fatigue, and that even so much might furnish her with ample subject for reflection.

CHAPTER XXII.

New beds of Roses — The Gardener remonstrates — Haymaking — The Prangos — Moorcroft, the Traveller — Potato — Sir Walter Raleigh — His House at Youghal — Visit from Lady Crowsdale.

FOR some days nothing remarkable occurred. Mrs. Manvers and Evelyn were gradually becoming acquainted; they walked in the fields, they boated on the lake, and frequently visited the neighbouring cottages.

Music was a happy resource to Evelyn, for it sometimes supplied the place of conversation, or perhaps produced it. Mrs. Manvers frequently sang with her; but her voice was variable, for, though her strength of mind had supported her in trials and difficulties, her nerves were not always proof against the painful force with which music sometimes recalls the associations of the past, and, though she bore it well when listening to Evelyn, she often faltered when endeavouring to exert her own voice.

Evelyn, meanwhile, recollecting that her father had said many improvements might be made at Cromdarragh, resolved that the first should be in her garden: as she looked at it from the windows of her cabinet, she was daily thinking of various little changes which might beautify it. At last, having determined to lose no more time in beginning, she went out soon after breakfast one morning, and without further consideration or even thinking of inviting Mrs. Manvers to accompany her, she flew to the American garden, as it had formerly been called, and summoned the gardener in order to give him directions for immediate alterations.

"I can make the new flower-beds if you will, Madam; but you know, Miss, there would be no use in planting flowers now in the middle of summer; they would certainly wither and die."

"Not they, indeed, if you water them well."

"And besides that, Ma'am, the garden-men are all very busy now. In a few weeks we could make a better job of it."

"A better job!" exclaimed Evelyn. "No, I will not wait—I like to have it done now, and if there are not workmen enough, let more be hired."

"Very well, Miss," said the gardener, looking very doubtful; "but—when Mr. Driver examined into the management of the garden and pleasure-grounds, he objected to the number of men we have now, and ordered that we should have no more on any account; but, of course, I will do as you please, Ma'am."

"Of course you will, indeed! and immediately," said Evelyn, feeling very indignant at Mr. Driver's orders interfering with her pleasure; and more than ever determined to execute her present plan, she gave directions for two small round beds to be made, one of which was to be planted with the rose de Meaux; in the other several beautiful plants were to be placed, so as to suit their colours to each other. Outside of these was to be one of a crescent form, along the back of which were to be tall rose-trees, in front of them smaller ones, and then low plants, so as to collect every variety, which, rising up thus from low to high, would be displayed to the greatest advantage. Besides these, woodbine and jessamine were to be put, so as to shade a seat which was at the farthest end; stands of creeping plants to be in the grass; and, lastly, a hedge of fuchsia and pyrus japonica, myrtle, and Chinese rose, instead of the sweetbrier-hedge that at present surrounded it. Having given these directions very rapidly and very decidedly, she was retiring, when the gardener, following her, begged to know which part should be first begun, adding, that in order to make the hedge she mentioned he must send to a distant nursery for the plants, which must cause some delay.

"Let the beds of roses be made immediately, and the seat shaded as I have said." And Evelyn hurried away to escape from the obstacles the gardener was inventing, as she thought, just to thwart her plans.

As she walked towards the house she met Mrs. Manvers enjoying the shade of a row of tall lime-trees.

"You look heated," said Mrs. Manvers.

"Yes ; I was standing in the sunshine, giving directions for some alterations in my garden, which I am in a hurry to have made."

"The poor plants ! how do you think they will bear transplanting in the heat which has so scorched you ?" said Mrs. Manvers.

Evelyn made no answer, and they walked for some minutes in silence, which was at length interrupted by the approach of the steward, who, hastening towards her, exclaimed—"Miss O'Brien, Ma'am, I beg your pardon ; I am glad I have found you—I wanted to see you about the haymaking, and to have your orders, if you please, Ma'am, about——"

"My orders ! I really thought you could have the hay made without particular directions ; have you never seen——"

"It is not that I mean, Ma'am, but about the men ; I was always allowed to have the garden-men for a day or two to help with the haymaking, but the gardener says you have given orders for immediate alterations in the garden, and he has refused them to me."

"Well, you must do without them ; I cannot spare them now."

"If I could have them for a few days while the weather is so favourable, it would be a great help, and most of the hay would be up ; there is a great deal cut, and we want to toss it out directly. Indeed, the new moon may bring rain, and then the fine crop of meadow will be lost for want of men, Ma'am."

"Hire more labourers, then, I desire—I will not allow my improvements in the garden to be interfered with."

"Very well, Ma'am, I will hire more men if I can procure them ; but they will expect extra wages at this season, and I don't know how I am to manage, for Mr. Driver objected to my having even so many as we have now, though it is nothing like the number we used to have when my old master lived at home ; but he says it is too expensive now."

"Hire more labourers, as I have already told you, and let me hear no more about it," said Evelyn, turning away, again provoked at the reference to Mr. Driver's orders.

"Have you seen the haymaking ?" said Mrs. Manvers ; "it

would be very pleasant to stroll towards the hay-field, and smell the fragrant gales that come from the newly-mown grass."

Evelyn assented; she had seldom seen haymaking, for in the neighbourhood of G—— the ground was either tilled or in pasture. They sat down under a venerable spreading thorn-tree near the haymakers, and in a few moments Evelyn's irritated spirit became calm. The sweet smell of the fresh hay, the people who were busied in different parts of the field, some mowing, some shaking out the grass, others making up small cocks of hay, the whetting of the scythe, and the merriment of the labourers, who were perpetually laughing and talking and singing, were new to Evelyn. She was delighted, and, forgetting whatever had discomposed her, thanked Mrs. Manvers for having taken her to that charming field. It was truly a charming field—large, skirted by groves and hedge-rows, while scattered about were a few ancient thorns, which marked more strongly the beautiful undulation of the ground.

They had sat silent for some time when Evelyn remarked, "What an engaging occupation farming must be for gentlemen! it must be so satisfactory to see their labours rewarded after a few months by such fine crops of hay and corn as we have here."

"Certainly, when the soil is favourable," said Mrs. Manvers; "but some soils are so poor that the miserable crops of hay or of grain that they produce are quite insufficient for the wants of the inhabitants."

"What then can be done? Are there any other crops to supply their place?"

"Yes; many substitutes have been tried from time to time," replied Mrs. Manvers, "with more or less success; the last which I heard spoken of as a substitute for hay is a Thibet plant named prangos, which grows in various soils and bleak climates, and is therefore considered to be well adapted to many parts of this country and Great Britain. And I believe a gentleman who resides in Donegal is now trying the advantage of cultivating it."

"Is it like grass?" said Evelyn.

"Not at all: it grows in separate plants with a stem about

four or five feet high; in the centre it is crowned by tufts of yellow flowers, surrounded with long dark-green feathery leaves, casting a shadow round of several feet broad."

"How unlike one's idea of hay!" said Evelyn.

"Very unlike it, indeed," returned Mrs. Manvers; "however it is cut and dried in its own country, as hay is here; then laid by on the flat roofs of the houses; and in winter it is found to be an excellent fodder for cows and sheep."

"I am sure it cannot look half as pretty as our own nice green fields!" said Evelyn: "besides, do you not think that the natural productions of each country are the best adapted to the soil of that country as well as to the wants of its inhabitants, and that we had better be contented with what we possess?"

"Yes, when possessed of fertile fields like yours, Evelyn: but suppose you had a sandy barren tract of land, would you not endeavour, by introducing plants adapted to it, to make it productive? If grain, which you know was not natural to this country, had never been introduced, how very destitute would our population now be! And the potato too! how fortunate that Sir Walter Raleigh was not influenced by that principle, or we should perhaps never have known that useful root here!"

"But," replied Evelyn, "I have heard Mr. Stanley and others say that its being brought to Ireland was unfortunate, as it encourages laziness."

"That objection is easily made," said Mrs. Manvers, "but I cannot agree to it. I have seen so many instances of the poor man enjoying the comfort of his store of potatoes, when perhaps he could not have managed to cultivate enough of any other crop to support his family, that I shall still rejoice in their possession of that most excellent vegetable. Many rich landlords have endeavoured to add to the comforts of the people by assisting them to build better houses, and to cultivate useful grain, and whenever I hear an instance of such exertion I respect them for it: but for my part I shall always consider Sir Walter Raleigh, 'the Shepherd of the Ocean,' as Spenser quaintly calls him, to have been one of our benefactors: and the little garden at Youghal, where the first potato

grew in Ireland, seemed to me a sacred spot that should be dear to all my countrymen."

"You have been at Youghal, then, and have seen the myrtles of which I have heard?"

"Yes, both in the garden and against Sir Walter's ancient house, which is a greater curiosity than the myrtles, for they grow luxuriantly near the sea in various parts of Ireland, or even than the bay-trees at the entrance into the court, where six of them form an archway under which a carriage may pass."

"But the house you say is a curiosity?"

"Yes—at least to those who have not seen many very old houses. I was astonished at the thickness of the walls, especially the partition wall between the staircase and kitchen, which is nine feet thick. The stairs, too, are remarkably narrow, for the house had in fact been in ancient times part of a friary, and Sir Walter made very few alterations in it. There is, I am told, some remarkable oak carving over the drawing-room fireplace of early date, but unfortunately for me, when I was there, the daughter of the resident possessor was ill, and we could not be admitted beyond the parlour, which is a long low room with three deep windows, nearly the same now, we were told, as when Sir Walter resided there, probably the happiest, at least the most peaceful, part of his life; when far from all the torments and excitements of ambition and rivalry, and before he had become the object of the injustice of party spirit and the malevolence of his enemies."

"I must read his history again," said Evelyn.

"Then I recommend his *Life* by Francis," said Mrs. Manvers. "It is excessively interesting, and the character of the times is well depicted I think."

"Was not Sir Walter Raleigh too much of a courtier?" said Evelyn. "The impression remains on my mind that he demeaned himself by the sort of adulation he paid to Queen Elizabeth; yielding too implicit a devotion to her will, and forgetful of all self-respect."

"So it may appear to us, but it was the fashion then; it was the remnant of the chivalry of previous ages; the queen exacted it from those around her; and they who were

thus devoted received in their turn distinction from her. A young man of his air and noble presence was an ornament to the court, and the vanity of good Queen Bess would of course secure the attention and homage of all such."

"But only think of any gentleman laying his cloak in the dirt for her Majesty to trample on! Such meanness!"

"Or rather such gallantry, as some people would say. I think you are inclined to judge poor Sir Walter too severely. You do not make sufficient allowance for the manners of the age, or recollect the extreme attention which was considered due to all our sex, and particularly to a queen. You should study the character of Elizabeth—a useful study, whatever station we may fill, for few have possessed and exercised more power over others and less over themselves."

Evelyn made no reply. They sat for some time without speaking: at length, rising abruptly, she exclaimed hastily—

"I see that troublesome steward coming towards us to plague me about workmen; do let us go away!"

"Yes, if you wish it; but would it not save trouble," said Mrs. Manvers, laughing, "to hear him now, instead of letting him follow you all about the field?"

"But I do not want him to speak to me; I want to escape from him. I am sure if he requires any directions I do not know what to say."

"Well, then you had better hear him at once, and inform him that you will depend on his knowledge entirely, and will not interfere."

"Yes, perhaps so; but I should then be forced to acknowledge my ignorance, and that would diminish my influence."

"Not half so much," returned Mrs. Manvers, "as the assumption of knowledge that you have not, and the consequent unreasonable exercise of authority."

As they had walked slowly forward the steward by this time had overtaken them, and respectfully requested permission to speak to Evelyn. Very ungraciously she stopped, and looking at him stood impatiently, without speaking, waiting, like the Chinese envoy, for him to begin.

"I wish, Miss O'Brien, to inform you that I have procured some additional hands as you directed; but I was forced to

promise them extra wages, and I am afraid it will be expensive."

"Oh! very well—it is of no consequence; that is my affair!"

"I wanted also to ask if you would prefer having the hay brought home at once, when dry, to the farm-yard, or made up in tramp-cock in the fields: Mr. Stanley and Mr. Desmond both recommended drawing it home in the English fashion, if you please, Ma'am."

"Certainly, in the English method; of course it is the best."

"I have my doubts as to that, Ma'am; and as we have never been accustomed to it"—

"It must be so, however, Mr. Mooney," said Evelyn, who always became determined to be obeyed when she saw any hesitation, or any disposition to reason with her.

Soon after their return from the hay-field some visitors were announced—Lady Crowsdale and her daughter. The old lady was stately and rather formal, but her countenance was benevolent. The younger was pale, graceful, and rather silent, but whenever she did speak her countenance was brightened by intelligence, and her manner was prepossessing.

When taking leave Lady Crowsdale invited Evelyn and Mrs. Manvers to dine and sleep at Ardeskar House, instead of paying a formal morning visit. She wished that her young people should make acquaintance with them, and hoped that the little museum which her son had lately brought from Guayana would interest Miss O'Brien, and which she and her young people would be happy to show them. Evelyn was pleased at the idea, and consented, without hesitation, to the day named by Lady Crowsdale.

After the departure of the visitors Evelyn went out again, ardent about the proposed alterations in her garden, which she found were in progress, and she was satisfied with what had been done, but sadly disappointed that her new hedge could not be made for several days. The gardener had written to his friend, a nurseryman in a distant county, to send the shrubs immediately. In the cool of the evening he said he would plant the rose-trees, but added that he feared it would be their certain destruction.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Deplorable Appearance of the Garden — The Sweetbrier Hedge — Her Mother's Garden — Method of Budding Roses — Widow Green.

EVELYN's peremptory orders about her garden were not to be disputed, and the gardener executed them with all the care in his power, though grieved at the loss of plants which he knew were sacrificed to childish whim. The weather being remarkably hot and dry, and having been so for some time, there was little hope that what were now removed could escape, as may sometimes happen when a soft refreshing rain comes in time to revive them. The new arrangement of the garden was planned with some taste; but the abundant watering of the evenings was not sufficient to save the plants from drooping in the heat; and when Mrs. Manvers came to look at the alterations, everything appeared so deplorable, that she sighed at the waste of time, plants, and labour, and exclaimed with astonishment at such a sacrifice. Evelyn, however, contented herself with saying she was sure they would recover, and showed very plainly by her manner that she did not wish Mrs. Manvers to interfere with her orders; but the gardener applied to her again about the hedge, with a secret hope that the presence of Mrs. Manvers might produce some change. "I'm thinking, Ma'am," said he, looking at the same time towards Mrs. Manvers, "that the sweetbrier-hedge might remain at the back of the new one that is to be; for if I take it up now, I know it is just killing it I'll be; and, besides, it will be some shelter for the new one, which I fear will do badly here, or anywhere indeed in this hot season."

"But I do not like to have so much space occupied by hedges," exclaimed Evelyn, "and I think it much better to remove it at once—as *I have already ordered*, and then the new one will take its place, and——"

"That hedge of sweetbrier! Is it possible you are going to take it away, dear Evelyn? Perhaps you do not know how fond of it your mother was; and that in fact it was planted by her own hand, from seedlings she had herself raised!"

"No, I was not aware of that circumstance; but how did you learn it?"

"I was staying here at the time it was planted, which was but a year or two before her marriage; and I well remember her enjoying its beauty and its scent when I returned here the following year. Your father, too, I think, would regret its removal."

Evelyn coloured; her eyes filled at the idea of her own mother's garden; yet, feeling vexed at Mrs. Manvers' interference, she endeavoured to turn the subject.

"I did not know you had been so much here before mamma was married!" said Evelyn.

"A great deal of my youth was spent here with her and my uncle; you know I told you that we had been companions."

"But I thought you were much the oldest," said Evelyn, "and that you lived with another uncle."

"Yes, my home was with another very dear uncle. I was older, but I spent much time here with my cousin; we were intimate friends, and indeed companions in all our occupations. We made this garden together, and I never enter it without thinking of her, and associating all I see here with tender recollections of her taste and activity; so much is her idea combined with every part of this place."

"Well, then, Ma'am," said the gardener, who had been standing patiently during this little conversation,—“about the hedge? Shall it be taken up?”

"No, no; let it stand. The new one may be withinside. Yet no; I will not have anything planted before it. A small hedge of the kind I had mentioned may be put round each of the new beds."

"Yes, indeed, Ma'am; that will look mighty pretty—if it grows," slyly added the gardener, walking away with great satisfaction.

"I wish," said Evelyn, "that I could have some roses mixed among the sweetbrier; that would not spoil it. There are in the old roseray several pretty ones; but they are too old to remove."

"Suppose you were to bud some of different kinds on the sweetbrier, which, being of the rose family, would answer well as a stock? It would be a pleasant occupation, and then, instead of spoiling what had been your dear mamma's, you would only improve it," said Mrs. Manvers.

"That is an excellent idea," said Evelyn. "But I do not know how to bud; so I must get the gardener to do it for me."

"I can teach you, if you like," said Mrs. Manvers; "it is very easily learned, and, being rather a delicate operation, may be much more nicely performed by a lady's fingers than those of a rough gardenman."

"Thank you, Mrs. Manvers, I should be glad to learn to do it; but first I wish you would explain to me what it is, and how it is done; for I really do not know, I must confess, though I suppose you will despise me for my ignorance."

"It is only voluntary ignorance that is despicable, my dear Evelyn; and where people have not had the opportunity of acquiring knowledge, who can blame them? There is much practical knowledge essential to good gardening, with which lady florists cannot generally be acquainted. Budding is a method of increasing trees or shrubs, by making one species grow upon the branch of another; it consists in the removal of a bud from the plant which is to be propagated, and inserting it into the bark of that on which it is intended to grow, and which is called the stock; if done carefully, and at the proper season, it generally succeeds."

"And what is the proper season? Are not buds to be found from the beginning of spring to the end of autumn?"

"All buds are not equally fit for the purpose: some contain flowers, some leaves: and of the leaf-buds there are two kinds; one produces nothing but the mere leaf—the other is the germ of a new branch, or rather of a new plant I may say. In spring, and again about the middle of summer, they are found

in profusion; they are particularly healthy in summer, for it is towards the close of that season that their increase in size may be chiefly observed in all shrubs and trees."

"I am afraid I should never learn to distinguish between the good and the useless buds."

"Oh! yes; with a small degree of attention you would soon perceive the difference."

"Do pray, Mrs. Manvers, let me see you bud something at once; suppose you take one from this rose de Meaux and put it on the sweetbrier."

Mrs. Manvers had not about her a proper knife for this operation; but, to gratify Evelyn's impatience, borrowed the gardener's, and, selecting a nice full bud at the foot of a healthy-looking leaf, she cut through the bark so as just to enter the wood, and then, dexterously turning the knife, she split off, along with the bud, about half an inch of the surrounding bark; afterwards detaching the little scrap of soft wood which adhered to it. She next chose a flourishing branch of the sweetbrier, and made two cuts in the bark in the shape of the letter T, but not so as to wound the wood; and then, introducing the smooth edge of the flat piece of ivory which is at one end of a budding-knife into the long incision, she separated the bark from the wood, keeping her thumb on the upper part to hold it firm against the knife, and, gently raising the lips of the bark, she placed the detached bud under them, with its little portion of wood and bark, which gardeners call the shield. When thus inserted, she cut the edges across, so as exactly to fit the bark of the stock at the upper part; next she cut off a part of the strap of bark which had been raised, so as to make its edge come exactly to the lower side of the shield of the bud; and then a shred of bass mat was gently passed two or three times round the branch, and tied, in order to keep all firmly together. The old leaf was left attached to it to shade the bud from the sun. Mrs. Manvers then told Evelyn that there are other modes of budding, which differ from this in some small particulars, but the principle is the same in all. This method is considered as best adapted to thin-barked shrubs, especially roses.

Evelyn immediately tried to imitate Mrs. Manvers in all she had seen her perform ; and though at first a little awkward, yet, encouraged by Mrs. Manvers, she persevered, and soon became sufficiently expert to amuse herself in budding a variety of roses on the little hedge, and among others a crimson moss-rose, which was not very common there ; and while thus engaged she frequently thanked Mrs. Manvers for having given her so pleasing an occupation.

The suggestion of this new object was a happy circumstance for both Mrs. Manvers and Evelyn ; the garden thus became an object of common interest, and Evelyn felt more at ease and more inclined to converse naturally with her.

One morning soon after the alterations in the garden had been begun, a poor woman, called the widow Green, begged to speak to Evelyn ; she stood on the steps at the great door, and had with her two pretty little girls. In her countenance and appearance there was something respectable and prepossessing, and Evelyn's interest for her was at once excited. Her story was soon told ; she was the widow of a former tenant of Sir Connor O'Brien, and after her husband's death had continued to hold his little farm. The lease was to expire the following November, and she asked Evelyn to promise her its renewal. She declared that she had paid the rent regularly till the last pay-day, when she begged a delay of one month till she could sell her cow at the neighbouring fair ; but Mr. Driver had given her notice to quit at November, and had advertised for higher bidders for the land : she therefore came now to petition her ladyship to remember the long time her husband, "and his father before him," had held the farm, and had always honestly paid their rent ; and though she was not as well off since the times grew bad, yet she had two sons, five young lads, who would soon bring all up again ; "and these little girls, I brought them in hopes you would take them into the school I hear your ladyship is going to have."

Evelyn exclaimed against Mr. Driver with indignation, felt much interest for the poor woman, and promised her the preference when the farm was to be re-let. The children, too, should certainly be in her school, but it was not yet built ; and in the mean time she promised to go and see her, and try what

could be done for the children. The widow departed with a light heart ; she had obtained, as she thought, all she asked, and little supposed that Evelyn's promise would be of no avail with such a man as Mr. Driver.

" My school ! " thought Evelyn, as she dismissed the poor woman. " My school, that I was so anxious and determined to have ! How idle I have been since I came home ! not a single step have I yet taken in regard to it, though I imagined I had it so much at heart. " She instantly sent for the steward, to whom she gave directions to engage masons and take all necessary measures without delay for the erection of her school ; to hire workmen to assist ; to procure stones, and lime, and sand, and timber ; that no time must be lost ; and, in short, whether at a convenient time or not, it must be immediately begun !

" And where is the school to be placed Miss—Ma'am ? " said the steward, in astonishment at her impatient energy.

" Oh ! I have not determined yet ; but I will go now and fix on the place. "

Fortunately Mr. Desmond had suggested one or two suitable places, and now, accompanied by Mrs. Manvers, whom she invited to walk, she went to decide on the prettiest spot.

" Do you not think it will be difficult to find people to assist at it now when so much country work is to be done ? " said Mrs. Manvers.

" Not if they are well paid, " replied Evelyn ; " and I must say that it is one of the advantages of a large property to have the pleasure of promoting industry by employing all around. "

CHAPTER XXIV.

Early Prophecies — Sceptre — Jacob's Predictions — Shiloh.

EVELYN had carefully noted down all that Mrs. Manvers said about the prophecy of our Lord which they had been studying, and, having in the mean time read that part of Genesis, she said to her one morning soon afterwards—

“If you are at leisure to continue with me our examination of the prophecies, I should very much like to go on with it this morning; you suggested it to me as a Sunday employment, but it interests me much, and I feel that it is better to devote a part of every day to a study of such importance.”

“You are quite right,” my dear Evelyn; “you gratify me more than I can express by your eagerness to continue this research, which I did indeed suggest as a suitable employment for the sabbath, but never meant to exclude from weekdays if you were inclined to pursue it. Let us then turn to Genesis xlix. 10.—‘The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.’ It has been universally allowed that this passage contains a clear prophecy of the expected Messiah, nor have the Jews of either ancient or modern times ever disputed it, though blind to the application of it to our Saviour.”

“Yes, I am aware of the prophecy,” said Evelyn; “but still I do not understand how it can be said that the sceptre should not depart from Judah, for at the time of the birth of Christ Judea was nothing more than a Roman province paying tribute to the emperor.”

“It was,” resumed Mrs. Manvers, “under subjection to Rome, but Judea still retained its own government, and, though it had had no king for a considerable time after the return from the captivity, it was under the rule of the High Priest,

who was always one of the princes of Judea. The word here translated sceptre might perhaps be more literally translated *rod* or *staff*, particularly that which belonged to each tribe as a symbol of authority. What is chiefly meant, therefore, is, that such authority and importance as Judah possessed at the time the prophecy was uttered was to remain with his posterity, and that they should not cease from being a tribe, or body politic, having rulers or governors of their own, till the Messiah came. After the title of king had been revived, Judea continued to be governed by a king: and observe, it was not until a few years after the birth of Christ that it became a Roman province; the judicial power of life and death was then taken from the Jews, and their ecclesiastical polity ended with the destruction of their city and temple, A.D. 70, at which time the Gospel had been preached throughout the then known world by the disciples of Christ."

"I wonder whether the names of Jacob's sons had any peculiar meaning," said Evelyn.

"They had certainly—the name Judah signifies the power of God. The character of the tribe was warlike and brave. They were the first who entered the promised land. The tribe in its different stages is compared to a lion's whelp—to a full-grown lion—and to a nursing lioness, the fiercest of all. Hence a lion was the standard of Judah. David, when reposing after his conquests, secure in the terror of his name, was called *Ariel*, or, *the lion of God*; our Lord himself was named THE LION OF JUDAH.

"Does it appear," said Evelyn, "that all his predictions about the fate of his sons were fulfilled?"

"Yes; while Jacob blessed his children before his death, he foretold what should befall them '*in the last days*;' and the history of each in after ages, as far as we may presume to interpret those mysterious expressions, seems to fulfil them, and serves by that means as a collateral proof of the truth of this remarkable prophecy touching Judah. The twelve tribes were, you know, united under one king, in the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, but on the revolt of the ten tribes from Solomon's son, Rehoboam, they became two distinct kingdoms; and afterwards, about seven hundred years before the Chris-

tian era, the kingdom of Israel, consisting of the ten tribes, was destroyed, and the nation dispersed, so as never to recover their government or to be restored to their country."

"I perceive," said Evelyn, "the distinction that you are going to point out. The kingdom of the ten tribes never was restored; but though Judah was conquered by the Babylonians and held in captivity for a long time, still it had princes of its own line, and its government was afterwards restored."

"You can scarcely say restored," said Mrs. Manvers; "for even during their captivity the Jews lived as a distinct people, having rulers and princes of their own nation. The princes of Judah, as Ezra says, arranged the return of the people to their own land. Judah was, therefore, justly considered to maintain possession of the sceptre; for Benjamin, though also allowed to go home, yet, being no longer named as a separate tribe, they became one nation, and from that time, you know, they were all called Jews; the government, in other words the sceptre, was in the hands of Judah, which ceased not to have, as I said, its own independent government till after the birth of Christ. The sceptre was, however, then departing; in about forty years afterwards the city was taken, the temple destroyed, the Jews either sold into captivity or slain; and for eighteen hundred years Judah has possessed no dominion—their sceptre is gone."

"I see, indeed, Mrs. Manvers, that Jacob's prediction was completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ; and that He is—must be—the true Shiloh. How can any one be so blind as to doubt it?"

"It is extraordinary," replied Mrs. Manvers, "that there can be any doubt on this head, for He came into the world at the time foretold, and the whole description is applicable to Christ and to Him only; but although the prophecy and expectation were distinctly fixed in the minds of the Israelites, yet they were blind to its fulfilment. However, I am happy to say that lately the Jews have appeared more willing to study the Scriptures, and seem to be more open to conviction. The time has now passed at which they flattered themselves that their Shiloh might appear, and many of that interesting but perverse people begin to surmise that He must have already come. I trust that the Nazarene, whom they have despised,

will, before many years are over, be acknowledged by them as having accomplished the prediction of Jacob."

"What is the exact meaning of Shiloh?" said Evelyn; "for I have read different explanations of it."

"Two meanings have been given by commentators," replied Mrs. Manvers, "both which appear to answer in some respects. The *sent*; Christ says of himself, 'The Father hath sent me;' and the apostles also speak of Him as sent into the world—the messenger of the covenant, sent to give us hope of pardon and life. The *peacemaker* is the other meaning: as Christ has reconciled us to our offended Father, so the Gospel comes with a proclamation of peace; and as all who believe in the propitiation of our Lord for us are justified and may have peace with God, so all must acknowledge with one heart and mouth that 'Jesus is our peace.' Either meaning of the word, or both, may be taken—whichever it is, we know that to Him will be the gathering of the people; that, having begun our redemption by giving himself a sacrifice for us, He, the author and finisher of our faith, will accept our penitence, and will bring us through the difficulties and trials of this world. And thus will be fulfilled a corresponding prophecy, which we find in the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah—'And the gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.' "

CHAPTER XXV.

Honest Nurseryman — Swarm of Bees — Evelyn's Courage and Steadiness — The Feeling of the People — The Hive — Bees of Cashmere — Honey — Smoke of Lycoperdon — Travelling Bees.

EVELYN's anxiety about her garden was painfully increased by the uncommon steadiness of the dry weather; and though heavy dews in the evening and early morning came happily to refresh the vegetation, they were not sufficient to prevent the scorching influence of the sun upon the rose-trees which she had so unadvisedly removed. They had, indeed, been abundantly watered, yet they were a melancholy sight, and Evelyn perceived but too plainly the folly of her impatience. Much as she had pleased herself with the idea of her tiny hedges of pyrus and other choice shrubs, and longed for their arrival, she was not sorry to find, by a letter from Mr. O'Reilly, the nurseryman, to her gardener, that he declined sending them at present—as it would be, he said in his letter, destruction to the plants and next to robbery of the lady who had ordered them.

“After all, though I believe it is as well for the shrubs not to be removed, the nurseryman had no right to think for me; and he should have considered that the disappointment might deprive him of my custom,” said Evelyn as they quitted the little garden.

“Does he not rather deserve respect for his honesty and disinterestedness?” replied Mrs. Manvers, “for he might have obeyed your orders and received his money quietly, anticipating another such purchase in a more favourable season.”

“Ah! yes, that is true; I did not at first see it in that light: he does deserve encouragement, and shall have all my custom. I will endeavour to patronise and make him known.”

“Oh! Ma'am,” said the gardener, “he is already well——”
Just at that moment, as they were passing along a walk

separated from the lawn only by a rustic paling, the gardener was interrupted by loud cries, ringing of bells, and strange noises ; numbers of people were seen running straight across the lawn towards the very spot where Evelyn stood. One person had a bell in his hand ; another was knocking poker and tongs together. Every one seemed in a state of excitement and bustle.

" Oh ! what can it all be ?—Is it a rebellion ?" exclaimed Evelyn.

" A swarm, Ma'am—a swarm of bees, Ma'am !" cried the gardener. " Oh ! Ma'am, you should not stop ; you are exactly in the line the people are running in ; and you know the swarm always flies in straight lines !"

Evelyn moved on a few steps ; but though Mrs. Manvers endeavoured to hurry her away, curiosity made her linger ; and, again stopping, she laid her hand upon a post of the paling, close to which she stood, observing the progress of the bees and their noisy pursuers. " Oh dear ! O Mrs. Manvers !" cried she the next moment, " here is a large bee on my hand !"

" It is the queen ! Oh, Miss ! Oh, my poor young lady !" cried the gardener. In a moment, before he had time to remove the queen bee, which had settled on her hand, thousands of bees came crowding together, alighting on the same little white hand, from which she had happened to draw her glove a little before the hasty advance of the swarm.

" Stand firm, dearest Evelyn ; do not irritate them by moving," said Mrs. Manvers. " How fortunate that your hand is supported by the paling ! Go instantly and find a hive or a box—something—anything to house them in," said she to the gardener, who stood, pale as death, thinking only of the horror his young lady must feel. But he was roused by Mrs. Manvers' presence of mind, and was going to search for a box in the garden-house, when she learned from some of the bystanders that the owner of the bees had already gone home for a hive, and would soon return.

Evelyn resolved to be calm. The crowd, so noisy but a moment before, now stood at a small distance, in silent suspense, admiring Evelyn's fortitude, yet, from time to time, softly saying to one another, " Oh ! it is she that's brave !"

"Oh! hasn't she the true ould blood in her veins?" "See how she stands it!" "That 's it, Miss O'Brien—just keep on quiet. Don't let your hand fall, my lady!"

Evelyn was aware, from the reiterated exhortations of the many voices, that, if she could remain still, all might end well. The friendly post supported her arm, while the sympathy and kind attention of Mrs. Manvers assisted to sustain her courage; and she soon became so much amused in observing the curious mass of living creatures partly clustered on her hand and partly hanging from it—a dense lump, and much larger than a man's hand might enclose—that she almost forgot the anxiety of her situation. She was delighted with the novel sight, and yet the minutes did seem very long till the return of the master of the bees; for though perfectly composed, and intent on watching the movements of her new companions, still she began to fear that, forgetting herself for an instant, she might, by a sudden movement, disturb and irritate them.

Mrs. Manvers reminded her that bees always distinguish between those who are fearful of them and those who treat them courageously but inoffensively, and that it is well known that you may go safely into the midst of a newly departed swarm, not a bee of which will molest you unless you rudely seize or injure it. They are so intent on their emigration, and so anxious about the safety of their queen, that they may even be taken up in handfuls at that time by a person accustomed to manage them.

At length the man who had gone for the hive returned. Fortunately he had previously prepared it, in the expectation of this swarm, and any unnecessary delay was thus prevented. Being well accustomed to the management of bees, he requested Evelyn to permit him to search upon her hand for the queen; she was soon discovered, and, being gently taken up, was placed in the hive, which he held slanting over the clustered mass. On perceiving their queen within, they instantly began to move from the hand on which they had rested, and quietly retired into their new dwelling; and, as the last bee quitted her hand, a loud huzza from all the spectators expressed their hearty sympathy. The O'Brien cry was

shouted with affectionate acclamation from all parts of the crowd; and Evelyn felt a thrill of pride and pleasure not unmixed with a feeling of awe. Mrs. Manvers sighed with regret that the enthusiasm of her countrymen, so easily excited, might in a moment be directed to the most lawless actions.

Mrs. Manvers advised her to return to the house and rest after her fatigue, but, declaring she was not tired, Evelyn preferred remaining to see how the bees were to be conveyed to their new home; she asked to whom the new colony belonged, and was not a little surprised at being told that she herself was now the owner.

It was an old custom in that part of the country that a swarm became the property of the person in whose grounds they had alighted; and the tenant, considering it would still more particularly belong to the lady of the manor, would not consent to take it home, and seemed really hurt when she disclaimed the prize. He declared it would be unlucky to both himself and her ladyship were he to carry it away; and that this swarm, above all swarms, was due to her on whom it had lighted. "It is yours, Miss, so it is, after settling on your own pretty hand."

"Ay, that it is—and a strong hand too!" said some one who stood near her. This apposite remark produced another enthusiastic peal of "*Llamh-laidir-aboo*."

Evelyn then proposed to pay for it: all exclaimed that that was equally unlucky; she accepted it, therefore, gracefully and kindly; resolving, at the same time, to give the former owner some compensation hereafter, and declared that this hive should be the beginning of an apiary which she would immediately establish.

The first question was, the situation in which the hive should be placed. The gardener, and the former owner of the bees, each gave his opinion, and Evelyn applied to Mrs. Manvers. They soon agreed on a sheltered little enclosure in a shrubbery, at the south-east side of the garden-wall, which Mrs. Manvers suggested because the bees would there be called forth by the early morning sunshine to collect their honeyed wealth. That place, being also sheltered from the north—near all the sweets of the flower-garden, and but

a short distance from a little rivulet, water being as necessary to bees as food—open in front—and free from any obstacle to intercept their flight to flowery fields and heathy bogs, seemed to be peculiarly suited to the purpose; and a temporary stand being quickly prepared, the hive was placed there. The numerous spectators then retired, and left the newly established queen and her subjects to rest after the agitation of the day—as well as their own dear young lady, who had won all their hearts by her courage and strength of mind as well as of hand.

Bees, and the various modes of managing them, became the principal subject of conversation with Mrs. Manvers for the remainder of the day, and led to a variety of anecdotes of those wonderful insects. She was well acquainted with their habits, from personal observation, and, having collected from travellers some knowledge of the various modes by which they were managed in other countries, she amused Evelyn by relating some of them. “In Cashmere, for instance,” she said, “where honey forms an important part of rural economy, the farmers usually establish their bees in their own dwelling-houses, and in a very peculiar manner, so that even so many as ten hives have been known to be in one house.”

“Hives really in their dwellings! How extraordinary! How can it be?”

“In building the houses,” continued Mrs. Manvers, “cylindrical cavities are left in the walls, purposely to lodge the bees; these cavities pass quite through the wall, and are plastered with mortar worked up with the chaff or husk of rice; or more frequently with thistledown, which is much used for mixing with mortar.”

“Thistledown!” exclaimed Evelyn; “I never had an idea that it could be of the smallest use in any other way than carrying the seeds of the plant to distant places. But if such a material could be used in this country, the poor might have a plentiful resource, I think, in the beautiful down of the bog-rush for the same purpose. But pray go on now about the bee-hives.”

“Well, then: those wall hives are more than a foot in diameter, and the ends, which are inside, next to the in-

habited rooms, are closed by a round piece of red pottery, like a plate, which fits exactly, and is cemented there with the clay mortar. The outer extremity of the hive is also shut in by a similar plate, but with a small hole in the centre for the bees to go in and out.

"And how do people contrive to get at the honey?" Evelyn asked.

"The process is not very unlike that which is practised here by those who do not wish to destroy those useful creatures. Having ready in an earthen dish a wisp of dry rice-straw and a small piece of burning charcoal, the inner plate of the nest is suddenly removed, the straw is lighted, and the smoke is strongly blown against the combs. The nearly stifled bees rush out through the hole in the outer plate; and when the hive is clear of them, the farmer cuts out the combs nearest to him, leaving undisturbed about a third part for the use of the poor stupified bees, who return when the smoke is gone. An old swarm makes more honey than a new one, and therefore the same community is preserved for many years, sometimes even to twenty."

"How unpleasant it must be to have the bees actually living so close to one's house, in its very walls! I should be afraid of their sometimes being cross or vexed, and becoming malicious," said Evelyn.

"On the contrary," replied Mrs. Manvers, "being thus domesticated, they acquire, we are told, more mildness of character than the bees of Europe; and the confidence subsisting between the two parties subdues their natural irascibility. At all events their comfortable situation, by preserving them from the changes of temperature and protecting them from their enemies, is thought to increase the produce."

"It was partly then for the warmth of the bees, Mrs. Manvers, that made you so anxious to place our hive so as to have the morning sun?"

"That position is recommended by the best bee-masters as a means of obtaining a larger supply of honey. The first rays of the sun fall on hives thus placed; the bees are up and stirring, and secure a large share of honey, before the more lazy or more shaded hives begin their daily labour."

"So that these creatures do benefit by our assistance, though when flying from flower to flower they appear scornfully independent of us!" said Evelyn.

"Yes, and that seems to be the case with all the creatures whose labours we press into our service. They require our care, and if we neglect them the loss falls on ourselves. When we adapt them, as it were, to our own purposes, we must contribute in our turn to their welfare. The sheep requires to be relieved of its fleecy covering when no longer necessary to its comfort; and in like manner we take that best beverage, milk, from the cow, who anxiously lows for our aid, and would suffer severely if neglected. And even bees, when domesticated, may benefit by our attention to their habits in thus selecting judicious places for their abode, in supplying them with food when requisite, and in relieving their hives of an overplus of population."

"What a cruel custom it is to destroy the poor bees when we rob them of their honey!" said Evelyn; "and ungrateful too."

"It is also very unnecessary," replied Mrs. Manvers. "The old idea was, that the increase in the numbers of the bees made the destruction of some of them necessary; but it has been ascertained by those who have studied the habits of bees, that with proper management a hive may occasionally be relieved of its surplus population by removing the queen into a new hive. A colony soon follows her; or, if not, may be put in by hand; and if this change be effected while there are still flowers to supply them with new stores, it answers very well."

"How can they be taken out of a hive without endangering the person who removes them?"

"There are different ways of managing this operation. One simple method," said Mrs. Manvers, "and which has I know been successfully practised, is by means of the common puff-ball, or lycoperdon. If gathered just before it is quite ripe, and burned, it emits a peculiar smoke, which when let into the hive by a small pipe quickly stupifies the bees. In this state they may be taken up in the hand so as to be gently removed into another hive, where they will recover in about a

quarter of an hour ; and provided the queen is along with them, you may be sure of their being quite reconciled to their new abode. In this manner the honey also may be taken without destroying these industrious creatures. It has been observed by some apiarists, that late in the year the queen is always at the top of the hive, firmly clinging to it by her little claws."

" But is there not some danger of the flame of the burning puff-ball setting fire to the hive?"

" The puff-ball does not flame, it only smokes ; and with a small bellows the smoke is blown through the tube, and seems to affect the bees instantly."

" What would happen if their queen was not with them?"

" They would not settle, but would continue in a state of constant agitation. The same person who used the puff-ball smoke with so much success amused himself by placing two swarms in the same box with a partition of thin canvas or muslin between them. Their young queen was duly placed with one of the swarms, but none with the other, and it was left in that state for twelve hours, during which the poor queenless bees were so much agitated and distressed, that many hurt or destroyed themselves in trying to get through the partition. At last, the muslin being withdrawn, both parties became quite happy with the one queen ; and it is remarkable that when the original queen of the swarm which had been left for some time without one was restored to it, her subjects put her to death, being quite satisfied with the other."

" And did the two swarms continue to live happily together?"

" Yes," replied Mrs. Manvers ; " but they did not make a larger quantity of honey than half the number ought to have collected."

" Tell me, Mrs. Manvers, when they have completed their harvest from all the plants in the neighbourhood, and that there is no succession of flowers of any kind, are they not at a loss for more food?"

" Yes, very much ; and then skilful bee-masters remove the hives for a time, after the swarming season is over, to other places, where they have not only the advantage of different

flowers, but also that of a change of air, which it is said contributes very much to the health of these useful insects, especially if taken to a spot where in sultry weather they may avoid being over-heated, and yet acquire a new field for their industry. You find, therefore, that, in most countries where tending bees forms one of the rural occupations, they are carried regularly in summer to the breezy heath and mountain."

"Just like driving the flocks from the warm valleys to summer pastures in the mountains, as I have read is the custom in Alpine countries," said Evelyn. "But how difficult it must be to transport the hives!"

"No," replied Mrs. Manvers; "a cloth tied over the hive keeps all quiet. This transportation of bees is not peculiar to any one region; but is, I believe, practised in all countries where hills and valleys produce much variation of temperature. In the north of England and in Scotland it is not uncommon for bee-farmers to remove their hives to places where there are large tracts of heath land apart from any habitations, and leave them for the time in care of the shepherds of the district."

"How very interesting the occupation must be of attending to an apiary, watching all the habits of these busy little beings, and trying to make them as comfortable as possible! But what a strange cargo it must appear to those who have never heard of the custom!"

"It is too common to be surprising," replied Mrs. Manvers. "In Germany whole caravans of bees may be met with on their travels, and sometimes making long journeys, which last three or four days. In some parts of France the hives are carried at night in boats, which float gently along the stream. At sunrise the bees fly off in quest of honey, and duly return to their own boat in the evening. The transportation of bees is an old custom in Greece also; ancient writers mention that the inhabitants of Achaia sent their bees into Attica for its later-blowing flowers. In Egypt also bees are transported by boat-loads up the Nile to those regions which produce the earliest flowers, and in such numbers, that one traveller describes a convoy of 4000 hives between Cairo and the Cataracts. The hives are marked by their owners,

and piled up in the form of a pyramid in each of the boats, which float along, or stop for a few days at such places as are likely to produce a harvest for the bees. The increase of their store of honey is shown by the boat sinking more and more in the water ; and after travelling for three months in this manner, the bees, having culled from all the flowers in those varied regions, are brought back to the places from whence they started."

" Thank you," said Evelyn ; " and indeed I may thank my queen bee for having selected my hand, or perhaps I never should have made any inquiries about the nature or habits of those important little creatures. I am sure I may rightly call them important, as but for them we should have neither honey nor wax."

" You forget that in China there is abundance of vegetable wax," said Mrs. Manvers, as she left the room.



CHAPTER XXVI.

Mrs. Manvers' Early Life — Her Aunts and Grandfather — The old Mansion — Her Early Marriage.

As each day unfolded the character of Mrs. Manvers, Evelyn perceived that a desire to govern formed no part of it, and that she had no wish to interfere with her tastes and inclinations; and therefore, allowing herself to be pleased, and gradually throwing aside her cold reserve, she became at ease. Their conversations on Scripture had gone far in leading to habits of intimacy; and as their minds gradually opened to each other in discussing various subjects, Evelyn became conscious that, when she herself was inclined to be amiable and goodhumoured, Mrs. Manvers appeared agreeable; and that, notwithstanding the difference of their ages, she was always ready to enter into her feelings or to converse with cheerfulness: so true it is that our enjoyment of the society of our friends depends chiefly on ourselves.

"I wish, Mrs. Manvers, that you would tell me some of your early life—at least, some of the interesting little circumstances to which you have more than once alluded," said Evelyn when they were at tea one evening. "That is," she added, observing the pensive countenance of Mrs. Manvers, "if it is not too painful to recall those times long past."

"They are, indeed, long past—and I often have wished that I could bring back their reality as I do the images which memory so vividly supplies; and yet it is a foolish wish, for those early days would probably not be as happy now; all things have changed more or less; and I may truly say with Johnson,

'New forms arise, and different views engage'

those who live now: the manners and opinions of that time would be unsuited to the present day. I have no objection, dear Evelyn, to relate to you some passages of my early life,

though you will scarcely feel much interest in anecdotes of persons who are now all gone—gone where

‘Time doth not breathe on its fadeless gloom’ !”

“Oh ! those are the times and persons of whom I should most like to hear,” said Evelyn : “the domestic history of former times is never published ; but I am sure it would be as interesting, and more entertaining, than all their political squabbles.”

“Only to those who happen to be interested about the individuals to whom it refers,” replied Mrs. Manvers. “In private life people flourish a few years, then the grave closes over them, and soon they are thought of no more. Each may have done good or ill in their narrow sphere ; but others take their place, and all personal interest in them ceases.”

“How melancholy is that idea !” exclaimed Evelyn.

“In public or political life the case is different,” continued Mrs. Manvers ; “the dispositions, talents, and even the caprices of individuals, are more or less connected with the fate of nations ; the effects of their passions and prejudices excite an interest for those who had become the causes of great events and mighty changes ; and the private biography of celebrated people often furnishes us with the true key of scenes and actions which would appear at first sight to have been the result of far more important combinations.”

“I think each would interest me,” said Evelyn ; “I have read a good deal of history, and now I intend to read more—probably with greater advantage, as I hope I am learning to reflect a little, and as I shall take great pleasure in comparing it with biography. But come, Mrs. Manvers—you spoke of an uncle and aunt—where were your own parents ? did you not live with them ?”

“My dear parents lived abroad for some years ; during which I was left with a large family, where I may say three generations lived together. My grandfather, one of the finest old men I have ever seen ; my grandmother ; and their son and his wife, who were that uncle and aunt ; an unmarried daughter of my grandfather’s ; a grandson, who was to be ultimately heir to the property, and his younger

brother, completed the family circle. But besides these inmates of the family we had always numerous guests in the house: in those days hospitality stretched the walls of houses,—and my aunt delighted in being surrounded by young people. She liked to see and to encourage the natural gaiety of youth, but then she was desirous it should be mixed with good sense and propriety, and always disapproved of silly trifling by way of cheerfulness. Having no children of her own, she had more leisure to bestow on others, and, with a heart overflowing with benevolence, she devoted her superior talents, and much of her time, to the education of children of my uncle's tenantry whom she sometimes even took into the house for that purpose. She endeavoured, indeed, to improve all young persons who came within her reach; to develop their talents and enlarge their views, and to excite in them a love of knowledge and a spirit of inquiry. To the neighbouring poor she was both friend and physician; so that they came to her from all quarters for medicines or advice. It was the same with the whole family; all were good and loved; and all this goodness was founded on that steady basis of true heartfelt Christian principles, which prevents our swerving from the simple straightforward line that the Gospel sets before us.

“My aunt's intellectual powers were of no common order, far beyond the usual talent of our sex, and there was such an originality in most of her thoughts, that she generally took some uncommon view of every subject; even in the mode of exercising her benevolence there was something ingenious as well as kind; and all this gave a peculiar zest to her character in the eyes of those who really knew her, but of course excited the ridicule of the narrow-minded. She was very indulgent to all around her; yet her indignation was easily roused by a failure in principle, or by ill-humour, or by a disregard of the value of time, the good employment of which treasure she was always trying to enforce.

“I remember to this day, as if it were but yesterday, her own little table at one side of the fireplace, in the room where we usually sat in the evenings when without company. Some of the family liked sitting in the dusk a part of the evening, but she could not endure such a waste of time. At that table—

in that spot, which some friend playfully named the *Poet's Corner*—she had lights for herself, screened from the rest of the party; and either read or dictated notes for me to write. Many a happy evening have I enjoyed with her at that little table, reading with her, or writing for her wise or witty extracts which she was fond of giving to her young friends.”

“How did she occupy herself all day?” Evelyn asked.

“A country life supplies abundant objects of interest,” replied Mrs. Manvers, “and in its daily routine people may always find sufficient employment. Her garden and her fowls, her books, attention to the poor, her active benevolence, and her constant instruction to the little girls whom she kept in the house, and who were generally in the room with her: besides these occupations, her thoughts were always intent on some new device for promoting the happiness or comfort of every member of her own family, and indeed of all within her reach. She was only too anxious for others and too forgetful of herself.”

“Oh! pray do not stop, Mrs. Manvers. Now tell me of your grandfather; was he like my own dear grandpapa?”

“He was as good and kind as your grandpapa, but of much more active habits, both of mind and body; he lived to eighty-six; and till the last four months of his life he walked and rode with the alertness and activity of a young man. Besides his home estate, he had some distant farms, to one or other of which, with persevering attention to their improvement, he almost every week used to go for a day or two, and sometimes I was permitted to accompany him; thus to the last preserving his active habits.

“While a young man, surrounded by a large family for whom provision was to be made, he devoted a great portion of his time to agriculture, and was one of the most industrious, and therefore prosperous, gentleman farmers of whom I have ever heard—frequently superintending his workmen in their various occupations, and particularly in the anxious season of harvest; but so well ordered was his time, that even during that busy part of his life he found leisure to pursue a regular course of solid reading, which he never neglected; for literature, planting, and beautifying his land were his chief pleasures.

He took part in all the sports of the field, and yet performed all his magisterial and public duties with the most exemplary constancy ; he kept up a constant visiting intercourse with the principal families of the neighbourhood, and lived in the truly hospitable style of a gentleman of those good old times."

"How was it possible to divide his time among so many objects?" said Evelyn; "a single visit in the country, a morning's ride, accounts, letters, looking at his workmen, might each have furnished occupation for the day, and would each engross so much time!"

"Certainly they did; but you know, Evelyn, as a trunk holds more when each article is smoothly folded and skilfully placed, so may the hours of the day be wonderfully stretched by those who are methodical in arranging their time. My grandfather always rose very early—usually at five—and he went to bed at ten. By this means he had the uninterrupted enjoyment of the prime of the morning; and before he met his family at breakfast he had read for some hours, had written his letters, and given directions to his steward for the day."

"He must have been a very uncommon person; I cannot imitate him in everything, but I might certainly in regularity and in early hours. Now tell me about yourself, Mrs. Manvers; who took care of you? had you a governess?"

"It was not so customary to employ governesses in those days as at present; and indeed I wanted none, for every one took care of me; I was the only child in the house, and therefore an object and a little companion to each of the family. My maiden aunt—the most tender and fondly attached of human beings—was my particular instructress. I was much with her; always slept in her room; watched over and cared for as if her own child; her companion in all her walks, and such walks, Evelyn—such charming fields and trees!"

"While my grandmother was living I sat much in her room; and as she was frequently very ill, my first exercise in nursing the sick was in attending on her. Many a time I have sat for hours by her bedside, watching every movement, either at work or reading, gently turning over the leaves lest I should disturb her. While I was still a child she died. I believe she and my grandfather had been married nearly sixty years!"

"But however charming and good all your companions were, you must have felt severely the want of a playfellow?"

"No, indeed, very little; I had sometimes young friends and companions, but, excepting a very few, I had no great pleasure in their visits, for when playing a long time with them I felt as if banished from my two dear aunts. I had sometimes with me a favourite cousin also; she was just my own age, and we were much attached. After the return home of my parents it was arranged that I should continue to reside at my grandfather's, but I had the great indulgence of going to them for a visit now and then, when I was indeed happy with them and my sisters. But after all, Evelyn, you, who did not live in those good times, when there was more of social intimacy and less of luxury and refinement than at present, can form little idea of our life at that dear old mansion, where the years of my childhood and youth passed away but too quickly. All my employments were pursued along with those aunts; my happy walks, my garden, my drawings of the magnificent oak and ash trees in the park, my singing, to all which they were too partial. And to complete the picture of my amusements, I must tell you that once or twice a-week, perhaps, a fiddler or a piper would come to the house, uninvited, and, like the ancient bards, play in the hall during dinner. When the first sound of the bagpipes was heard it was a joyful moment to many besides myself, and indeed the gaiety it caused among the young people who happened to be with us was enjoyed equally by the elder part of the family. We had frequent little dances, too, among my young friends in the neighbourhood; so you see I did not lead by any means a dull life. But I have dwelt too long upon these particulars. I want to impress on you the tender affection of my grandfather, the fond partiality of my uncle, and, above all, the unceasing and judicious kindness of my beloved aunts—all forming the charm of the happiness I enjoyed. They were all so good, and, though so different in some things, yet living so happily together, that we were considered by most people a peculiar family. If I could more forcibly paint them to your imagination you would not be surprised at my affection for them; you would only wonder how I could leave them!"

"Leave them, dear Mrs. Manvers! was it to go to your parents?"

"Alas! no. It is painful, even at this distance of time, to recur to my silly conduct, but the confession of my folly is a just punishment for my obstinacy and ingratitude."

Mrs. Manvers paused for some moments; Evelyn, in anxious expectation, laid down her work, looked at her agitated countenance, but did not venture to speak.

"To my parents did you say? No; they too well knew how much my aunt and uncle were attached to me, and the debt of gratitude I owed them, and would not have tempted me to forsake them. I cannot dwell on that part of my life; and will only say that, contrary to the advice of my dear uncle and of all those beloved friends, and against the earnest desire of my own father and mother, I married a young officer who was quartered in the neighbourhood. It was not very long after the Rebellion—when all were rejoicing in the restoration of peace and order—that, still too young to form any knowledge of character or to be a competent judge in the selection of a companion for life, I was deaf to the remonstrances and warnings of those who had loved me all the years of my life, and whose wisdom I had till then revered. I accepted the hand of one who had known and loved me only a few months!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

Schoolhouse in Progress — Reapers — Visit to the Widow Green —
Evelyn promises to repair her House.

EVELYN was much interested by Mrs. Manvers' account of her early life; but, observing the agitation it excited, she determined to refrain from asking any more questions on the subject, and for some time adhered to this resolution.

The weather was so fine that she spent a large part of her mornings in reading under the trees, or in rambling about the plantations, sometimes alone, but more frequently with Mrs. Manvers; the little schoolhouse, which was at last in progress, now became the constant object of their walks.

The stones, lime, and sand, having been collected, the mason and the carpenter were advancing with the wall.

In her ardour to accomplish whatever she began, which is a very commendable disposition when not carried too far, she would gladly have hired more workmen, but none could be had; other people were employing masons as well as she, which was to be sure provoking—and all the labourers in the country were fully occupied by the harvest. In one of their afternoon walks Mrs. Manvers and Evelyn visited the large wheat-field belonging to Farmer Ennis, in order to see the reapers and binders, of whom there was a numerous party at work there. It was a beautiful sight; the field skirted by large oaks and extensive and undulating in surface, was rich with the golden crop, which, all brilliant in the sunshine, seemed to impart a joyous feeling to the hearts of the prosperous farmer and of his diligent workmen. The air resounded with the cheerful voices of the labourers, whose continual and characteristic talking, often interrupted by the hearty laugh, had reached the ears of Evelyn and her friend even before they entered the field. It was about two o'clock; the reapers and the binders were seated in various groups

under the shade of the trees and hedges, at their simple dinner of dry potatoes and a bottle of sweet milk, which had been brought to them by some of their family. Mr. Ennis too had been engaged in the same manner; he and his sons were seated under an ancient ash-tree, at a small distance from his workmen, at whose hour of rest he always made his own dinner. He was rising from his rural repast just as his visitors approached; he welcomed them with hearty good-nature, pointed out the beauty of the field and the progress that had been made that morning, and, gratefully rejoicing in the favourable weather, said, "Now, Madam, that I have had a good meal of cold beef, I can oversee my men for the remainder of the day, and, having rested under the shade of this tree, I am more refreshed than by walking home and then back again in the heat; and, without fatigue, I can go about and see that all do their duty, and, of course, doing my own in trying to make the most of the blessings that Providence sends me in such a crop and in such weather!—and let me tell you, Miss O'Brien, there is not such another crop in this part of the county. There is plenty, I dare say, in the low rich grounds in the northern part of it; there fine crops are common enough, but few have such farms here as this which I hold from you; and I am truly happy that you are here, Madam, to see the produce of your land, and, moreover, that you are living among us, where we shall love you better and think more highly of you than if you were in London, or in any of those foreign parts where our great gentry are so fond of staying!"

Mrs. Manvers and Evelyn sauntered about the field gathering the pretty corn-cockle and other wild flowers, looking at the workmen, and sometimes, though cautious of giving offence, venturing to sketch some characteristic group. They were much amused at the variety of appearance and air among the young women who were employed in binding the sheaves;—some working with masculine energy, and others with unconscious grace, while some pretty faces were looking askance from time to time, to meet a returning glance from a swain hovering near them, or as if to see if any were admiring them; while, again, the older workmen stopped their

work at intervals, when unobserved, to have a little talk or to circulate some mirthful jest.

The scene was so animating and so new to Evelyn that she and Mrs. Manvers lingered in the field a long time before they took leave of Mr. Ennis and his cheerful party. They then shook hands with his happy little boys, and returned by a different path from that by which they had gone to the field, in order to visit the widow Green. As they walked along Mrs. Manvers gently exclaimed—

“ Oh! how much that scene reminded me of the fields I have so often rambled in when I was young; and of the little histories my dear aunt used to give me of her youth; and of the delight which I have often heard her express in looking back at the time when all the younger part of the family used to accompany my grandfather to the busy harvest-field, where he used to have his dinner sent to him, and where they had the great delight of sharing it with him under some wide-spreading tree, and of enjoying the long summer's day in happy, active idleness—sometimes walking with their father, or sometimes amusing themselves in pigmy efforts to imitate the various labours they beheld. Those were always days of jubilee to my aunt.”

“ Yes, no doubt they were,” said Evelyn; “ I think I can well understand the feelings of old and young. Do you know, Mrs. Manvers, I could have been almost tempted to join in the play of those little Ennises, and to have bound up some sheaves myself! But I see we are now at the poor woman's wretched cabin; will you come in and help me to judge of her wants?”

The visit, being quite unexpected, caused great surprise to the widow, but it was satisfactory to Evelyn, for she found her and her two little girls industriously occupied.

She was reeling wool in order to knit stockings for her sons; the eldest girl helping her mother, and the other feeding the young chickens and a flock of young turkeys, while a little boy of about five or six was sitting in the chimney corner learning his lesson from a torn and dirty Primer. Nothing could equal the joy of the poor woman at this visit, because she considered it a confirmation of the assurance

which Evelyn had given that she should not be turned off the farm ; and immediately pointing out the ruinous state of the cabin, she added, "that now her ladyship had given her a promise of a renewal, she would set about making the house comfortable, which she could not venture before to do."

"Pray do," said Evelyn, "and let all be well done—I think you want new thatch too."

"Yes, indeed, Ma'am, and new rafters in some places, and many a little thing. And, in troth, the walls themselves are in but a bad way, for I am obliged to prop them up there at the gable with some bits of trees I got from the steward long ago ; and the window was broken all to smash in the last storm, when a great limb of that tree there fell on the house and damaged it. And more than all I want, please your honour, Ma'am, to make a drain to carry away the wet that lies again the house and makes a pool of dirt and unwholesome stuff just up at the door like."

"Yes, yes," said Evelyn, "I see you do very much want those repairs, but can you afford so much at once?"

"Ah ! indeed, indeed ! I don't know, but I thought you are so good, may be you would help me a little with it, as they say good landlords do. I'd be sorry to be encroaching, but a little help towards making the place habitable would set us up for the winter, and would keep away the fever, I am sure, from this land, and would make us as snug as you are yourself, my lady, up in your fine ould castle."

"Well, I will give you some help towards it," said Evelyn, touched at the idea of the contrast between the poor woman and herself: "let it be set about as soon as hands and materials can be procured. Good morning." And Evelyn, smiling graciously at the widow Green, who was blessing and praising her, walked away hastily.

After a few minutes' silence Mrs. Manvers said, "I am afraid you are not quite prudent in leaving the widow Green at full liberty as to the extent of her repairs ; depending on your assistance, she may do more than she ought, and you may have a large sum to pay."

"No, no—not the smallest danger—all the repairs together

can cost but very little, and you know it is my duty to assist my tenantry."

"You have *promised* her also that she shall not be turned off her farm, but I thought that must depend on your guardians, and that you have not yet any power of that kind."

"I am determined nevertheless to do as I will with my own property, without interference from Mr. Driver or *any one*," replied Evelyn, with a toss of the head. They walked home in silence.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Visit to Lady Crowsdale — Her Garden — Guayana — Mr. Crowsdale's Museum — Cassava — Blowpipe Plant — Cerambyx — Cock of the Rock — Music — Ita Palm — Victoria Regia — Departure from Ardascar.

EVELYN had informed her father of Lady Crowsdale's invitation, at the time it was made, and, as he approved of her accepting it, she and Mrs. Manvers set out on the appointed day for Ardascar House, to which they had a pleasant drive of an hour and a half.

Conscious of her inexperience and youth, Evelyn felt somewhat abashed at the idea of this, her first visit, as the heiress of Cromdarragh Castle; but Lady Crowsdale's manner at once set her at ease. Her reception of her guests, though stately and dignified, was far from cold; and while her amiable countenance confirmed the welcome her words expressed, it was evidently more that of kindness to "a young friend" than of consideration for the representative of Sir Connor O'Brien. To Mrs. Manvers Lady Crowsdale's manner was polite and respectful, showing by her allusions to former meetings at Cromdarragh Castle that she was quite aware of her near relationship to the O'Briens. This was satisfactory to Evelyn, who dreaded her being mistaken for a governess, partly from regard to the feelings of Mrs. Manvers, and partly because it hurt her own pride that she should be supposed under any control. Soon after their arrival Lady Crowsdale proposed a walk to the garden and conservatory; it was just what Evelyn wished, as gardening was at present a pursuit of peculiar interest to her. The day was charming, everything looked cheerful, and the numerous beds of brilliant flowers of every colour and tint which decked the parterre dazzled her eyes and excited her emulation. The young ladies nicely divided their attentions between their guests; and Evelyn observed that one or other

always accompanied Mrs. Manvers. Sometimes all walked together, sometimes in parties; but they never separated themselves completely from the elder ladies, thus exemplifying what her father had lately said to her on the subject; and at the same time that she saw the advantage of it, she perceived with what perfect ease and good breeding the young ladies conversed with Mrs. Manvers as well as with her.

When they returned from the gardens they were taken up to their rooms to dress; and soon after they were assembled in the drawing-room dinner was announced. It passed off agreeably, and Evelyn perceived that good conversation may be carried on without stiffness—even with vivacity—notwithstanding diversity of age and want of previous acquaintance. She was much struck with the attention of every one to Mrs. Manvers, as well as by the variety of entertaining anecdotes they drew from her. The only guests beside themselves were Mr. and Mrs. Vincent, who resided a few miles from Cromdarragh Castle, and, having formerly known Sir Connor O'Brien, were glad to make acquaintance with his granddaughter.

In the evening Mr. Charles Crowsdale, the young traveller, willingly undertook to exhibit his Guayana museum; and the whole party followed him, by Lady Crowsdale's desire, to a small room adjoining the library, where his collection was arranged.

"I do not well know where to begin," said Charles, "for each of these little specimens must appear to you of trifling value, though I considered them very important at the time I collected them, as they either threw some light on our inquiries, or perhaps suggested to us new objects of research. We visited some places where no European had ever before set foot, and we became so accustomed to the people and to their modes of life, that I really felt regret at quitting them, and am almost inclined to accompany my friend S—— when he returns to Guayana."

Lady Crowsdale and her daughters made many exclamations at the idea of his revisiting those sultry and barbarous regions; but, smiling affectionately at their alarm, he began his exhibition.

"In the first place, here are some baskets of various forms; and I assure you that, however barbarous my dear mother may consider those people, they are very ingenious. Look at the beauty and excellence of this work, far beyond that of our common baskets, and, as you may perceive, neatly woven in different patterns and colours."

"What a curious-looking shape that long one is," said Evelyn, "almost like a boa."

"Yes; that long narrow cylinder which, as you remark, resembles a boa in dimensions and form, is used for the purpose of extracting the juice of the cassava-root, which, though poisonous, is the principal food in that country, and in other parts of the world also. The root is scraped or grated into this species of basket, which, when quite filled, is hung up to the roof of the hut. You see a ring attached to its lower end, by which, with a hooked stick, it may be pulled forcibly downwards; being made of very elastic materials, it is thus considerably lengthened and narrowed, by which its contents are compressed, the juice exudes from the sides, and leaves the remaining substance wholesome and nutritious, eaten you know in some countries in the form of farina or meal, and in others granulated, and called tapioca, which we all know is used everywhere for pudding. The grater for scraping the roots is also ingenious; it is made, as you see, of soft wood, into which small chips of clink-stone are driven, and so deeply, that only just the sharp edges remain above the surface."

"Savage as those poor people are," said Mr. Vincent, "they seem to show great expertness in their contrivances."

"My little collection," Charles replied, "was made principally of the productions of nature, or I might have had many more samples of their useful ingenuity and neat execution; but I will describe the method in which they make their hammocks, as an instance of that expertness for which you give them just credit. They spin out the cotton as it comes from the tree, with their fingers, into good strong twine, which they wind into balls. Having placed two parallel rows of stakes firmly in the ground, the threads for the warp are fastened across from one stake to the other, and then, with their fingers only, for they have neither shuttle nor needle, and with

singular patience, they weave in the long threads, passing them under and over the others, and so regularly, that it appears as smooth and even as loom-made linen, though very coarse. The hammock is finished by a rich fringe formed of the ends of the threads, and when neatly gathered up at the clues and hung across the hut it becomes a very comfortable bed or sofa, I assure you."

"Rather slow work, I apprehend," said Mr. Vincent.

"Yes, I confess, rather slow; weaving one of these cloths occupies about a month. The people are naturally indolent, but when they have a work of this kind in hand they show considerable industry."

"But I think, Charles, that our looms and shuttles are also useful inventions, and that we need not to imitate your new friends."

"Imitate them! no, certainly not in the method of manufacturing their cloth; but you will allow, that, civilised as we think ourselves, it might not be very disadvantageous if we were to imitate that perseverance and firmness of purpose which enables them to do so much, and that too without the apparatus of which you boast. It is impossible not to admire their power of contrivance when we see what they perform. Now, Mr. Vincent, just observe this spear."

"Very pretty wood indeed, and nicely polished."

"But besides its pretty polish, observe that in the handle there are some little pebbles which rattle when the spear is shaken; now, Sir, can you guess how they were placed there?"

Neither Mr. Vincent nor any of the assembled audience being able to guess how it was done, Mr. Crowdsdale explained.

"The method is simple. Having made a slit in the wood, they heat it at the fire till it opens sufficiently to cut a hollow in the interior; into that hollow they put the pebbles; the wood is then cooled, the slit closes, and you are surprised at hearing the pebbles within, the rattling noise of which helps, they think, to terrify the enemy."

"And pray have these people any other arms than the spear?" said Mr. Vincent.

"Yes," replied Charles, "they also use poisoned arrows; and they have a curious manner of blowing them through

a tube about twelve feet long, and with such precision as to hit even a small object at a very great distance."

Mrs. Manvers having inquired how those tubes were made, he replied, "They are formed of a hollow reed, which grows something like bamboo, but perfectly straight and free from knots, to the height of fifteen or sixteen feet, and then branches off, forming a graceful and bending head: we call it the blowpipe-plant."

"And do they depend on that mode alone for throwing their arrows? Have they no bows?" said Mrs. Manvers.

"Oh, yes; excellent bows of the common kind, made of a hard but elastic wood; the bowstring is made of silk-grass,* and peculiarly strong."

"Well, I must say that your Guayana friends seem to make ingenious use of their resources; what might not be made of *them* if they had the benefit of education!" said Mr. Vincent.

"That is a great question," said Charles; "for in every country that we attempt to civilise we introduce much that destroys the manly simplicity and uprightness of the natives! But I must not say all I think of those amiable people, who were so friendly to us that it is natural I should be interested for them."

"And I am sure," said Evelyn, "you have much interested us also for them. But do tell me, what is that large shell-looking thing on the table; is it a cocoa-nut?"

"No," replied Mr. Crowsdale, "it is the fruit of the *Bertholletia excelsa*, a tree of uncommon height. I have seen many of them with a tall perfectly straight trunk of sixty or even eighty feet high. For a long time the tree was not known, though the Portuguese procured the fruit in abundance; then the tree was discovered, but not the blossom, till, a few years since, a specimen was sent to Sir William Hooker, the celebrated botanist. I had the pleasure, however, of getting a specimen of the yellow blossom myself, when some of these tall trees were blown down by a hurricane, otherwise I should never have found it. This nut that you see is at least fifteen inches in circumference. Each of these great shells contains numerous small nuts, often as many as twenty; they are commonly called Brazil nuts."

* *Bromelia karatas*.

"I have eaten Brazil nuts," said Evelyn, "but had no idea that they were packed in such a case as this; why is that cord tied round it?"

Charles took off the cord and showed her that he had sawn the shell into halves so as to exhibit the nicety with which the little nuts were fitted together within the cavity. Evelyn was delighted; and with her usual ardour resolved to have some of these singular Guayana plants flourishing in the hothouse at Cromdarragh Castle; she then inquired if he had met with many other beautiful trees and plants in those regions.

"Oh! yes, an inexhaustible variety; to-morrow you shall see some dried specimens," replied Charles, smiling at the eagerness and animation of her countenance. "In the mean time I will show you a few insects that I have preserved; but they are not as curious to see as they were to *hear*. I cannot describe the multitude of strange sounds which, mixed together, used to amuse us at night; but indeed not all proceeding from insects alone."

"At least you can tell us who were the performers in these Guayana concerts?"

"I will begin with the voice of the wild bull, heard at the distance of several miles; then the unceasing noise of the frogs on every lake and pool of water; next came at intervals the moan of the owl; and then the wild ku-kuru-kuru notes of the goatsucker, which are not like those of a bird; and besides these you can scarcely imagine the grating noises made by the *Fulgoria lanternaria*, as well as by another insect which we called the knife-grinder, for I can only compare its music to that of the 'needy knife-grinder:' and we had a large cicada, which was very common, and which usually began about sunset with a sound something like one of the sharp notes of musical glasses, and was not disagreeable, though it might be heard at a considerable distance."

"Did you ever discover how the sound was produced?"

"Yes, at last we perceived that it was by a series of membranes which occupy half the body of the insect, and resemble the tympanum of the ear." He would have proceeded with his list of nocturnal performers, but Evelyn, having perceived a collection of ants of various forms and sizes, exclaimed,

"What a multitude of those detestable little animals there are to plague the poor Guayanas!"

"Yes; you see specimens there of several species of that troublesome race; but it was very instructive to observe their habits, though in more ways than one they annoyed us. That little winged kind that you have in your hand sometimes quite darkened the air; but, poor creatures, they soon fell to the ground, and then became the prey of the other varieties of the same family, as well as of birds and lizards."

"Pray show me that kind," said Mrs. Vincent, "which makes the great ant-hills, from five to twelve feet high, of which I have read such curious accounts."

"Here is a perfect one," said Charles: "its body measures above three-quarters of an inch in length, and that of the upper wing is actually an inch and three-tenths; I have sometimes seen the places where they had settled in great numbers, surrounded with fires by the Indians in order to collect them, for they are eaten as food. But there is another kind of ant, still larger, which those people eat also. I remember one evening seeing all the boys of a village chasing them with sticks and palm-leaves—their loud shouts expressive of the ardour with which they pursued them. They succeeded in collecting numbers of them in their calabashes; for when roasted or boiled they are considered as great a delicacy as the famous grugru worm. And now, ladies and gentlemen," added Charles, bowing like a showman, "I think that I had better postpone the exhibition of my birds till to-morrow, as I am unwilling to tire you by showing you too much at once."

"But pray, brother, before you stop, do tell Miss O'Brien about that great beetle-like creature that saws through wood," said the youngest Miss Crowsdale.

"It is the famous *Cerambyx*,* of which I am sure you have read. Some incredulous people have doubted the truth of those travellers who have described it; but I assure you I had the pleasure of being myself an eye-witness of its actually sawing off a branch of a tree. Having first seized the branch with its powerful serrated mandibles or jaws, it then flew or whirled itself round and round like the vanes of a windmill, and in

* *Prionus cervicaria*.

no very long time the job was fairly completed. I watched the whole process; and when nearly cut through, the weight of the branch, which was almost as thick as my wrist, brought it and the insect to the ground together. You see it is large and powerful; above five inches in length, and rather showy in appearance, as the wing-covers are striped with yellow."

"Thank you," said Evelyn: "I had read of it; but your having yourself seen that curious creature at work adds to the interest of the account, and satisfactorily removes all doubts; but," added she with some hesitation, "I do not know why we should not hear something of your pretty birds also this evening; I am sure no one can possibly be tired of seeing this beautiful collection, and of learning so many amusing facts—at least I am not."

"Nor I, certainly," said Mrs. Vincent; "I willingly second you, Miss O'Brien."

"So do I, friend Charles," said Mr. Vincent. "Let us have them while we can; another time may not answer as well."

"But what does my mother say? am I engrossing too much of the evening?"

"No, my dear Charles, I think I may say that you are not, as every one appears to be interested; for my own part, I like to hear you on any subject, rejoiced as I am at having you safely at home."

"Well then," said he, "I will show the most remarkable bird that I ever observed. Here it is—the cock of the rock, or *Rupicola elegans*: its bright orange plumage had a singular effect flitting among the trees on the banks of the Berbice, and greatly added to the beauty of the scene as our canoe floated down the stream."

"I recollect," said Mr. Vincent, "having seen that bird in Captain Smythe's collection some years ago when I was in London, and being much struck by his description of the singular brilliancy of plumage which seems to distinguish many of the tribes that inhabit the woods and banks of the river Amazon."

"But I hope he did not describe its curious antics," said Charles, as he resumed its description; "such as we had the

amusement of seeing among the Kirkeritza Mountains—what I could scarcely have believed, indeed, had I not seen them. In ascending those hills through a sheltered ravine, we heard its peculiar twittering note, and, following the direction of the sound as softly as possible, came to a small secluded spot quite free from grass and perfectly smooth; where to my great satisfaction I saw one of these birds performing the most extraordinary capers, and what seemed equally astonishing was the apparent delight of several spectators of his own tribe, to whom he seemed to be exhibiting: now spreading his wings and throwing up his head, now opening his tail like a fan; sometimes strutting about and scratching the ground, and always going about with a sort of hopping gait till he appeared to be fatigued, when, gabbling some kind of note, he retired, and another took his place. Afterwards three others in succession took the field, each withdrawing to rest on some low branches, apparently with much self-approbation. The party consisted of twelve; but a noise that Mr. S—— made alarmed them, and they disappeared. This bird is also known by the name of the Rock Manakin, and is much prized by the Maionkongs, whose chiefs wear a crest of its feathers mixed with a profusion of beads.”

“It is a handsome bird certainly,” said Lady Crowdsdale, “but not comparable in elegance to the famous bird of Guatemala, the Trogon resplendens, so prized in that country that it is represented in the national flag. It is of the most brilliant green, like that of the wing-feathers of a peacock. I saw one a few years ago which had been presented by the unfortunate Colonel Galindo, a native of Guatemala, to a friend of mine in London. Besides its very fine colour, it is distinguished by its tail, which consists of three very long feathers. But I beg your pardon, Charles, for my *mal à propos* interruption.”

“Certainly I think *bien à propos*, my dear mother, for you remind me that I also saw and greatly admired it. My collection of birds is very small, for it was not only difficult to preserve the skins, but indeed to carry them or anything. I can, however, show you a few feathers of the noble stork of Guayana, which is rather rare, and very peculiar from having

a white body with black wings, which extend above six feet. Here is a slight outline of its figure; and below it you may see a sketch of another great bird, the Jabiru or Mycteria, which is shy and difficult to get at, but I used to see hundreds of them wading in the swamps. They look very grave and dull, but are remarkable for their size; I have seen some that were nearly six feet high and whose wings extended to fully eight feet. The bird is white with a rose-coloured neck and black head and beak when full grown, though while young it is grey. This wing, which I preserved with difficulty, may give you some idea of its size."

In contrast with these giants of the feathered tribe, Charles showed a few very pretty humming-birds and bright blue creepers; then, closing his exhibition, thanked his audience for the flattering interest they had taken in his museum, and attended them to the drawing-room.

Tea and the usual evening occupations and amusements succeeded the museum. The Miss Crowsdales sang together, well and unaffectedly, and then pressed Evelyn to sing also. She felt great reluctance, yet, thinking it would be ill bred to refuse, and encouraged by a look from Mrs. Manvers, she determined to try; but, new to the world as she was, and called on for the first time to display her talents for the amusement of strangers, the confidence which had been inspired by the praise of her instructors forsook her, and the natural diffidence of youth, while it diminished her present success, gave her perhaps a salutary lesson. Her voice, powerful when she was at ease, trembled, but was true. She had been well taught, and, though feebly, she sang with expression. The cadences of the ancient Irish air which she had chosen evidently touched and pleased her hearers, and led to a lively conversation on the peculiar beauties of Irish music, as well as on the connexion of some of its most remarkable airs with many interesting circumstances related in the early history of Ireland.

It was interesting to Evelyn, and she felt a proud consciousness of belonging to one of the ancient families who had gloriously distinguished themselves; but though her feelings were strongly marked in her countenance, and though her dark

eyes seemed to flash at the mention of the deeds of former times, she said not a word, and admirably restrained herself even when some of the party, Mr. and Mrs. Vincent in particular, laughed at as fabulous the early history of Ireland and all the learning for which it was celebrated.

Fortunately recollecting her father's warnings to her when on some occasion her national feelings had burst forth with rather too much vivacity and decision, she listened in silence—a great satisfaction to Mrs. Manvers, who had been fearful that Evelyn's devotedness to her country might betray her into some warmth in its defence.

The next morning all the family assembled at the sound of a gong, and Lady Crowsdale, assisted by her son, read, according to her usual custom, a portion of Scripture and then prayers.

After breakfast Charles exhibited his collection of dried plants from Guayana, many of which were so uncommon, that Evelyn, though no great botanist, observed their peculiarities, and was highly pleased at the descriptions he gave of each. Mrs. Manvers saw them with the more interest because there was in some respects such a contrast between them and the flora of the more northern regions of America, with which she was acquainted.

“It would be tedious to name to you all the beautiful plants, well known to you in story, which are scattered about that country in the wildest profusion; and this drawing of the *Victoria regia* shows what charming plants the rivers produce. I must mention that the rocks were clothed with rich *Gesnerias* and *Alstrameras*, and that the *Erythrina coralladendrum*, commonly called coral-tree, grew abundantly near the rocks, which it enlivened with its superb scarlet flowers.”

Amongst the collection was the *Sobralia Elisabetha*, which Mr. Crowsdale described as the tallest and most graceful of the extensive orchidean tribe, its pure white flowers growing in splendid bunches, and their aromatic scent almost equalling their beauty. There was also a specimen of a singular flower found by him and Mr. S—— on the banks of the Parima, but he assured them that in its dry state it could give no idea of its enchanting clusters of large white flowers tinged with

the hue of the rose, and containing its long pink stamens. These clusters were in great profusion and were well relieved by the airy foliage of its dark green pinnated leaves, which preserved their character even in the dried specimen. The young leaves of a very light modest green he described as hanging down in fringes, adding, as it were, much to the virgin simplicity and variety of its appearance. It was a genus, he said, till now unknown to botanists, but had been named by Mr. S—— the *Elisabetha regia*.

He showed a specimen of another species of that new genus, which bore magnificent clusters of scarlet flowers; but, Miss Crowsdale having expressed surprise that he had not made coloured drawings of those unknown plants, he replied, "There was not time, sister; we were seldom stationary, so that to describe and dry them was the utmost we could do; besides, we had no great supply of paper, being obliged to have but scanty baggage, as its carriage was troublesome. It was usually conveyed by Indians in tin canisters, which were suspended from their foreheads by a broad band formed of the young leaves of the Ita palm plaited together—that most valuable palm, which is said to furnish a family with all the necessaries of life."

"I do not recollect having heard of that variety of palm; has it any other name?" said Mr. Vincent.

"Yes, its proper name is *Mauritia flexuosa*. I never can forget its grandeur, rising to the majestic height of one hundred and twenty feet before it spreads out its large crown of fan-shaped leaves; nor the relief that we felt when travelling through hot and arid plains at the sight of the ita, which, growing always in moist places, gave a sure hope of finding water. Like many other individuals of the tribe, the fruit, the juice, and the pith are all useful; rude huts are made of its stem, and are covered with its leaves, which make an excellent thatch; the stump of the leaf serves as a broom; and the little cases which half enclose the leaves are used by the natives as sandals; necessity forced us in some of our journeys to use them ourselves as a substitute for shoes. But the fibres of the young leaves are above all useful, being easily manufactured into thread and ropes of great strength. Even the

Guayana oriole shares in its advantages, for it uses those fibres in making and suspending its nest, and the natives use the young leaves plaited together as a strap for carrying their burdens. But I must not say too much of my favourite palm, which you cannot value as I do."

"You have not mentioned any of the cactus tribe," said Mrs. Manvers: "are they not very abundant in South America?"

"So abundant," replied Charles, "that it would be endless to attempt to describe them; yet some are very remarkable. I have made no collection of them myself, but I might have mentioned to you one of such uncommon size that I measured and noted its dimensions at the time. It was a cereus, and really deserved the name of a tree, but its structure was of a different nature. The stem was above six feet in circumference, and the trunk rose ten feet before it divided into numerous erect branches, some of them forty feet high."

"Huge indeed!" said Mrs. Manvers; "it was probably a gigantic specimen of the Candelabra cactus described by Humboldt."

"Quite of that nature," he replied; "and it is satisfactory to find that Humboldt's observations and descriptions have been invariably confirmed by those who have visited the regions which he traversed."

"He has not," said Mrs. Manvers, "like poor Bruce, had the mortification of being doubted during his life, and consequently treated with contempt. And now that the accounts of recent travellers confirm most of Bruce's assertions, it is too late to repair the vexation which his sensitive mind must have suffered."

"Well, brother," said Miss Crowsdale, "that is a mortification you have not had to endure, as yet at least; you have hearers ready enough to believe all your adventures and descriptions."

"My audience has been a very partial one," said Charles, smiling at his sister; "but I dare say much doubt may be in store for my friend S—, for whenever our observations give some result inconsistent with the theories of other writers they will, of course, accuse us of mistakes."

Some agreeable conversation with Lady Crowsdale succeeded the exhibition of the Guayana plants, and Evelyn began to feel quite at ease in her company, for she had discovered that her Ladyship's reserved and stately manner wore off whenever her sympathy was excited, or that she felt the benevolent desire of sharing with others whatever pleased and interested her.

The time for departure, however, came at last, and, with mutual expressions of kindness and promises of future intercourse, Evelyn bade adieu to her new friends

This visit, besides its variety of amusement, had all the charms of novelty to Evelyn; she enjoyed it, as was natural for a fresh and youthful mind, and discussed it in their long drive home with a degree of confiding openness which gratified and surprised Mrs. Manvers, for she had rather expected to find Evelyn's usual pride and reserve increased by all that had taken place. But the fact was, Evelyn's thoughts had been so much engaged by the variety of objects that attracted her attention that she had had very little opportunity to think of herself. Such a multitude of new ideas had occupied her mind, that it was kept somewhat on the stretch. Lady Crowsdale and all the family had treated her with much politeness and attention, but not with that distinction which perhaps she had expected; and the respect with which they had treated Mrs. Manvers, showing the estimation in which she was held by them, influenced her in some degree. Though well brought up, yet among so many strangers she had felt under some degree of restraint, and now, once more alone with Mrs. Manvers, she was glad to converse unrestrainedly as with an intimate friend.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Evelyn's Reflections — Prophecy of Balaam — Moab and Edom —
Pilate — Influence of Faith on our Conduct.

THE visit to Ardescar House was a new chapter in Evelyn's life—and an useful one. She had perceived that it was not at Clonallen alone that good conversation and good breeding were to be found; and had observed that, while Lady Crowsdale preserved her own dignity as head of the family, she spoke with gentleness to all, even to her domestics. Evelyn recollected with a blush the proud and authoritative manner which she herself frequently assumed, imagining it necessary to her own self-importance; and a firm resolution better to discipline her mind was the immediate result of her self-conviction.

The beauty of the gardens and conservatory at Ardescar excited her emulation, and the morning after her return she began to form various plans for the improvement of her own. No longer treating Mrs. Manvers with proud reserve, she even asked for her aid in projecting the many alterations which she now imagined were essential, rapidly developing all her own little schemes, and consulting her with a freedom and affability which were very unlike the haughty self-sufficiency with which she had usually announced her "intentions." Her mild and sensible companion, however, succeeded in persuading her to make no further changes at present, for, the garden having been so lately altered, the plants could scarcely be expected to stand a second removal, even should they recover from the first; and, reminding Evelyn of the various works she had begun, proposed a walk to see what progress had been made in the schoolhouse. By a sloping path at one side of the garden, and then through the grove,

they soon reached the pretty little spot where Evelyn had placed the school that she so anxiously longed to see finished. The clink of the mason's trowel told them as they approached it that the work was going on with activity, and, to her great satisfaction, she saw that the walls would soon be completed.

As they slowly walked home, Evelyn said abruptly, after a silence of several minutes—

“Mrs. Manvers, do not imagine that the visit to Ardescar House has made me idle by interrupting my regular occupations; far from it. I shall feel fresh pleasure in returning to them; and I do think it will be of use to me to have seen how cultivated people in this country think, and speak, and act.”

“Yes, my dear young friend, I quite agree with you that it is both useful and interesting to observe the manners and understand the views of those amongst whom we live; but at the same time we must take care not to be too much influenced by the conduct and opinion of others.”

“I do not think I am much addicted to that,” replied Evelyn; “on the contrary, I fear that in general I am too much inclined to judge for myself, and to form my own plans without caring whether they meet with approbation or not, and therefore you cannot very well accuse me of being easily influenced by the opinion of others.”

“My dear Evelyn, I did not accuse you, as you seem to think, of being directly led by others; I meant only to hint that those who from a sort of energy of character form very decided opinions for themselves, and therefore reject, or at least feel little value for, advice or assistance, will often insensibly yield to the influence and example of those whom they admire.”

“Perhaps that is the case,” Evelyn replied. “But I do not know how we have got to that subject, for I was going to say that I have not been negligent of my Scripture studies, though I have not spoken of them for some time, and that now I want your assistance.”

“And most willingly shall you have any in my power;

but I fear that we shall be interrupted here. Shall we defer the subject till we return to the house?"

"Oh, no, let us go on now. I want to tell you that, since my attention has been directed to the prophetic passages in the Old Testament, I find my mind awakening to much that I had before overlooked, and questions have occurred to me which you will, I hope, be so kind as to solve."

"As far as I am capable, my dear Evelyn, and if beyond me we must apply to those who are more learned."

"In the first place, then," said Evelyn, "I have been considering the prophecy of Balaam, and it appears surprising that such an unworthy man should have been selected to predict future events of such vast importance, and to have been favoured with such a share of inspired knowledge as to have overcome even his own wicked intentions."

"But," said Mrs. Manvers, "you must consider that it was not out of favour to him that he was employed on that occasion to pronounce a blessing on the Israelites; on the contrary, he disclaims all power to bless or curse, and acknowledges that he must speak only as directed by the Almighty—a decided proof in itself that he was under holy but compulsory influence. He was aware that he should forfeit the promised reward from Balak, yet his prophecy seems to have been dictated by the same spirit as that of Jacob, of which it furnishes the continuation and development; and it evidently proves that the gift of prophecy was not at that time confined to the chosen people."

"I have somewhere read," said Evelyn, "that his prediction was not directed merely to the ultimate success of the Israelites over Balak and the Moabites; but perhaps you will be so good as to give me a fuller explanation of it in that point of view."

"There can be no doubt," replied Mrs. Manvers, "that it involved a far more important meaning, distinctly foretelling the future times of the Gospel, and describing the advent of the promised Messiah. The passage has always been interpreted to that effect, by Jewish as well as Christian writers, and contains internal evidence of its allusion to that glorious personage."

"But," Evelyn asked, "how do you mean that it was a continuation of Jacob's prediction?"

"According to the Septuagint," Mrs. Manvers replied, "as well as the Samaritan Pentateuch, Balaam's words should have been translated, 'And there shall come forth a man of his seed, and he shall govern many nations.' That Greek version called the Septuagint was made, you know, three hundred years before Christ, and therefore long before there could be any motive whatever to tamper with the prophecies respecting the Messiah. Its testimony as to this passage is supported by some of the best Jewish authorities and historians; and Cyprian, an early Christian bishop, also cites the prophecy as the Septuagint gives it. Thus you see, by a natural transition from the present to the future fortunes of Jacob's posterity, Balaam refers to the words of Jacob on his death-bed, the allusion of which to the Messiah is distinct; and when the prophet is overpowered by his vision, though still preserving his intellectual powers—all which is forcibly described by the expression, 'falling into a trance, but having his eyes open'—he shows the nature of the prophecy by those emphatic words—'I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh.'"

"Why," said Evelyn, "did you dwell so particularly on the expression 'There shall come forth a man'?"

"Because I wished to point out to you that the words of Pilate, 'Ecce Homo! Behold the Man! Behold your King!' whether uttered in contempt or commiseration, are thought by many commentators to bear a tacit reference to that memorable prophecy of Balaam."

Evelyn asked, "Was it probable that Pilate, a Roman, had ever heard it?"

"The prevalence of this prophecy," replied Mrs. Manvers, "not only in Judea, but throughout the East, is mentioned by one of the Roman historians, and it is not unreasonable to conjecture that not only Pilate might have heard it, but that it was the cause of the alarm excited in Herod and all Jerusalem by the inquiry of the Eastern Magi, 'Where is he that is born King of the Jews?'"

"And of course," said Evelyn, "the prophetic mention of

a star, passing from generation to generation of the eastern nations, disposed the Magi to follow the guidance of that star which led them to the infant Saviour."

"Assuredly; and well do Balaam's words apply to Him. A star—for He shines by his own inherent splendour—serving as a guide to those who will follow Him, and may well be represented by that symbol; for where the heart and mind are enlightened by the knowledge which He inculcated, we may truly say with St. Peter, 'The day dawns, and the day-star arises in the heart.' Indeed, He represents Himself as such in the Revelations—'I am the bright and morning star.'"

"And as a sceptre?" said Evelyn.

"Yes; a sceptre, being an ensign of power, expresses metaphorically, but forcibly, the dominion claimed by our Saviour when he avowed himself a king to Pilate, although He declared at the same time 'that his kingdom was not of this world.' 'He that shall have dominion'—'He at whose name every knee shall bow'—can be applicable to no other than Christ, whether we consider Him in his own Divine nature, or as Divine Mediator, or as Lord of all, exercising universal dominion, and maintaining by his grace a peculiar kingdom in the hearts of those who have been subdued by his merciful goodness and power to faith and obedience. Throughout all parts of this prophecy you may observe a marked reference to some kingly personage, in common with the national prosperity of the Israelites. The adversaries of the church of Christ seem to be designated by Moab and Edom, and it is predicted in various passages of Scripture that he will smite and destroy them."

"And therefore," said Evelyn, "in our application of this prophecy we may I suppose extend our views beyond those particular nations, and understand that it comprehends all who wilfully oppose Him?"

"Undoubtedly," replied Mrs. Manvers. "There are also numerous passages in the Psalms, as well as in other parts of the Old Testament, prophetic of His universal dominion; for instance, 'Yea, all kings shall bow down before Him, all nations shall serve Him!' But I will not point them out; it will be more gratifying to you to find them for yourself."

"Yes," replied Evelyn, "and I thank you for having suggested to me an employment which will now interest me more and more as I pursue it. In the mean time I assure you, dear Mrs. Manvers, that I am not ungrateful for the pleasure I have derived from conversing with you upon these prophecies."

CHAPTER XXX.

Irish Rebellion of 1798 — Defenders — Nightly Attacks — Military Patrols — Morning Dances — French at Bantry Bay — Providential Storm.

"THIS drizzling rain which seems to be set in will deprive us, I fear, of our afternoon's walk," said Evelyn; "and therefore, Mrs. Manvers, as I see you are taking out your work, I wish you would indulge me with a little sketch of the Rebellion of 1798, which you have mentioned once or twice. It is so interesting to be actually acquainted with a person who has herself really seen a rebellion."

"You speak of seeing a rebellion," said Mrs. Manvers, laughing, "as if it had been some wonderful curiosity to be exhibited; but I saw neither rebel armies nor battles fought. There was, indeed, very little apparent difference in the general face of the country; and I might have known very little of all its horrors, had I not heard others speak of what was going on; but as the anxieties of that time gradually became known to me, they did, indeed, make a deep impression on my mind."

"Pray tell me all that you knew about it: what led to the rebellion; how it began; and why there was one at all?"

"I was so young at the time that I can now scarcely attempt to explain the hows and the whys. Where there are grievances, real or imaginary, there will always be found ill-disposed, ill-judging people to fan the discontent into a flame; but for the real causes of that sad affair we must have recourse to future history, when party spirit will have had time to cool. I can only tell you such trifling circumstances as came within my own knowledge."

"Had the rebels any regular regiments? I suppose the uniform of them all was their favourite green and gold—or——"

"No, no, Evelyn; very few had then such fine dresses; poor creatures! they were ill-clad, and, fortunately for the empire, ill-armed, and ill-disciplined. But you asked about the beginning of that rebellion. Alas! it can scarcely be said to have a beginning; for many years before it broke out the country had been repeatedly disturbed by large bodies of armed men under some quaint title, such as Whiteboys, Rightboys, Peep-o'-day-boys, and latterly, more in my time, calling themselves Defenders, who lawlessly went everywhere searching for arms, often taking the life as well as the arms of those who resisted them. Some gentlemen prudently deposited their guns in a place of safety, while many others determined to protect their houses, and did, indeed, bravely defend them against those *Defenders*. The marauders, by tampering with servants, and by other means, generally contrived to discover what arms and ammunition were in any one's possession, and if there was a weak spot in the house they were cunning enough to find it out and to force their way in, so that people were obliged to be constantly on the alert."

"How terrified you must have been even at the expectation of such visitors! Did they never attack your uncle's house?"

"No," exclaimed Mrs. Manvers. "He was so much beloved, so just and kind, that his tenantry and his labourers declared that he should never be harmed in any way: they kept their promise, and so far was I from being alarmed that I assure you I felt rather disappointed that no attack came. I imagined that it would be such an entertaining event—a kind of adventure."

"But what would you have done if they had come?" Evelyn asked.

"What I might have had strength or resolution to do, had I been tried, I cannot venture now to say; but every one's feelings were at that time worked up to a certain degree of courage, and I should have taken my share in the defence of the house, or tried to do so. Amongst other contrivances, large stones were so nicely placed on every window stool upstairs that the slightest push would throw them down on the assailants below; and that much I was determined to do according to orders. Besides which I actually persuaded one

of my cousins to teach me how to fire a blunderbuss. Many a night I lay awake watching to hear the distant horn which the Defenders sounded, both when exercising in the fields and when going about in large bodies ; and many a time, when I imagined that I heard them assembling round the house, my heart beat high with the hope of being the first to give the alarm to the family, and so contribute to their safety by watchfulness as well as by my own efforts."

" Were the other members of the family all agreed to defend the house in case of attack ? Suppose your uncle had quietly given up your old blunderbuss and his other guns, would it have much signified ? "

" My dear Evelyn, what a question ! it would have been a stain upon my uncle's honour as a gentleman and a magistrate, and an injustice towards government, to increase the mischievous power of the mob by yielding his arms. No ; if he had not been convinced that he could repel any attempts to obtain them, he would have sent them to the next military station. You asked if others of the family were agreed as to defending the house : yes, every one. Even my grandfather, then eighty-three, declared that, if the Defenders broke into the house when my uncle was away, he would stand on the defensive at the first landing-place of the stairs, and, even were he alone, would resist them from step to step, and inch by inch, till he himself was shot."

" But I am sure your uncle would not desert him or the family ; of course he stayed at home to protect them," said Evelyn.

" My uncle, being a magistrate, had public as well as private duties. Detachments of military went out day and night in search of the Defenders, who, though sometimes in great force, were very difficult to find, because there were always people on the watch who gave them information with surprising rapidity of the movements of the troops. But as these detachments could not act without the presence and direct sanction of a magistrate, it was arranged that each of the neighbouring magistrates should in turn reside for a week in the town where they were quartered. My uncle, of course, took his turn. You may imagine that at those periods we all

suffered dreadful suspense and anxiety when he was out night and day—a most fatiguing life. I shall never forget what we felt.”

“What a harassing life of watching and anxiety it must have been!” Evelyn remarked.

“It was truly,” said Mrs. Manvers. “One night, I remember it well, when he had been out with one of those expeditions, his road on returning led him by his own gate, and he rode up to the house to see us for a few minutes; his harassed and tired looks showed what he constantly went through, and it was a sad contrast, when we were all safe and comfortable at a large fire and sitting down to supper, to see my dear uncle ride away from us of a cold dreary night, and perhaps to encounter some horrible danger. But, thank Heaven! no harm happened him then or at any time, and great was our joy when, having fulfilled his week’s duty, he returned home. Besides those harassing expeditions with the military, he was captain of a corps of yeomanry whom he had regularly to train and exercise. It was an anxious time: Heaven grant that such times may never return!”

“Did the country continue long in that horrible state?” said Evelyn.

“It remained in a very troublesome state for nearly two years,” replied Mrs. Manvers. “Our social intercourse was very much interrupted, for those Defenders went about in large parties, not openly by day like an army, but at night. During that time scarcely any one ventured to dine out; several carriages had been stopped at night, and the ladies much frightened; and after that, none but the very imprudent exposed themselves to such unnecessary danger, at least during the winter nights; in summer people were more courageous. The marauders, however, did not entirely prevent our mixing with our friends. Some of our neighbours had been for years in the habit of giving a merry dance at Christmas to celebrate the return home of their sons from school or college, and this always produced such a happy meeting, that they could not relinquish the pleasure it gave to both young and old. They now, therefore, agreed to transfer their little happy dances from the evenings to the mornings; and during two or three winters these

merry, though rather uncommon, meetings were continued. They always began by a breakfast, at which we assembled as soon as possible after the daylight of a winter's morning had begun, and we dressed for them as nicely as for an evening ball: beginning as soon as our breakfasts were finished, we danced all day, with the intermission only of refreshments, till obliged to hurry away so as to arrive at home before the short days became quite dark."

"How very extraordinary!" said Evelyn. "You must have felt it rather unnatural to dance all the morning: that amusement seems to belong more to the close of the day."

"But I was then at an age when all novelty is delightful, and when pleasure is often mistaken for happiness; indeed, I thought the cheerful gaiety of a dance with intimate friends could not be mis-timed. Besides which, not only do our feelings change with age, but the manners and customs of the world are likewise perpetually though gradually changing. In Ireland people are daily becoming more refined, and I think less hospitable, more formal, and more ostentatious in their entertainments, and therefore deriving from them less real enjoyment. However that may be, I joined with all my heart in the preparation for those parties, as well as in all their pleasures, beginning with the large breakfast-table covered with all the substantials and all the delicacies of which my hospitable aunt could think, next the gay dances of many sets and many figures, interrupted only by trays of refreshments, but soon renewed with fresh energy; then at the end of the morning a collation resembling a dinner, and finally the regret I foolishly felt when the day was over."

"And how long, Mrs. Manvers, did that uncertain and uncomfortable life of mixed fear and pleasure continue? did it last till the real Rebellion began?"

"No, no; at least there were several intervals in which alarm seemed to subside. The Defenders began in 1792, but in 1796 we had begun to venture out again in the winter evenings, for I recollect being at a ball immediately before the memorable visit of the French at Bantry Bay. The whole country had for a short time appeared to be tranquil, but

it proved to be only the stillness that precedes a storm ; a French fleet bringing troops to assist the discontented was suddenly discovered off the south-west coast. The military quartered at Cork were, of course, immediately despatched to oppose them ; but it was winter, and there were bad roads and many difficulties to encounter. Many mistakes, too, were made in regard to the baggage and ammunition, for some of the balls were of a different calibre from the cannon. In short, we were taken by surprise, and everything seemed to conspire against us. Yet the people in the south and west were loyally disposed, and nobly lent their aid to the military in every way in which they could be useful."

" And did the French troops land ? it quite puts me out of breath," said Evelyn.

" No, my dear ; bad weather and thick fogs had separated the French fleet at sea, so that only part of it anchored in Bantry Bay—and from that portion of it, fortunately for the repose of poor Ireland, the Commander-in-Chief of the expedition was absent. The next in command hesitated—time was lost ; such a fog came on that the enemy could not see the coast, although they plainly heard the voices of the people on the shore. The next day a furious storm arose, which broke their cables and blew their ships out of the bay into the open sea, where some were lost and others taken : and only a shattered remnant of their once grand armament returned to France. Thus was the country saved from a severe struggle."

" What a providential storm ! Oh, Mrs. Manvers, it was like the time of the Spanish Armada, and well might the good old king exclaim with Queen Elizabeth, ' He blew with his wind and they were scattered ! ' "

" Yes, indeed, my dear Evelyn, and the interposition of Providence was so manifest and so striking that it was deeply felt by all who had dreaded the danger. I never shall forget the excitement that all that news produced even round our own fireside."

" What was the effect on the people ?" Evelyn asked.

" For the greater part of the following year our county was less disturbed. The gentry resumed their usual intercourse ; but though we were tranquil, the awful blow which we had

so narrowly escaped seemed to dwell in every one's mind ; and I do not think that the same joyous spirit returned even to us young people. Each year was, indeed, making us a little more wise and sober, and the turn which the invasion gave to every one's feelings and conversation, along with the interruption of our trifling gaieties, caused a perceptible change in our occupations and pursuits. The year 1797 was passed in tolerable comfort however ; dinners and balls gave an appearance of quiet to the country, and people's minds seemed to be less anxious.

“ But under that deceitful tranquillity the leaven was still working—suspicions were awakened during the winter—and in the spring of 1798 the rebellion did actually break out, and rebel armies took the field.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Widow Green's Cabin — Honest Mason — Mrs. Manvers' Advice about imprudent Benevolence — Evelyn interferes with the Tenantry.

THE school-house was now ready to be roofed, the wall plates were laid, and as the masons, who had worked rapidly in their desire to please the "young mistress," as Evelyn was called, could not proceed with the plastering till the carpenter and slater had performed their parts, they were ordered to set about the repairs of the widow Green's house, which Evelyn had promised.

Determined that whatever she did should be done well, and the cottage made really "comfortable," Evelyn wished to give exact directions about it in person, and requested Mrs. Manvers to walk with her to the cabin, as she feared that if she gave only a general order to the mason, he might not pay sufficient attention to the job.

Mrs. Manvers suggested that it would be wise to let him first examine the cottage, in order to give her an estimate of the expense; and she urged that, at all events, the steward was the proper person through whom the directions should be given. Evelyn, however, declared she would not apply to him on this occasion; he was, she said, always doubting, and fearing about expense,—saying money would run short,—and therefore she hated to talk to him about her plans. "Besides," added she, "I know best what I wish should be done."

But her ideas of comfort went so far beyond the most ambitious views of the poor widow herself, and the house, on examination, seemed to her so little worth repairing, that she was much inclined to build a new one at once, though the widow and her son preferred the old one where they had always lived: and, notwithstanding the prudent warnings of Mrs. Manvers, Evelyn would actually have ordered it to be begun,

and would thus have entangled herself in expenses of which she had no distinct idea, had not the mason, with remarkable disinterestedness, assured her that the walls were quite safe, and that the house as it stood could be rendered as comfortable as Mrs. Green could desire, reminding her at the same time that a new one could not possibly be fit to inhabit before winter. This being a consideration far more important in Evelyn's estimation than the cost, she consented to its being repaired only, and gave directions to the mason to proceed with the work immediately, pointing out to him numerous things which, in her opinion, were absolutely necessary. The chimney to be rebuilt, and made to draw the smoke more freely—new timbers in the roof, which was to be re-thatched—a larger and more airy loft made, with a window or louver in it for the sake of ventilation; all the inside to be ceiled, and the whole plastered and white-washed within and without; a new door, new window frames of a larger size than the former, and the floor, which was in a bad state, to be flagged.

She then asked the widow whereabouts she would like to have a small dairy built; and gave directions accordingly to the mason. The rough uneven space or enclosure between the house and road was to be made level and neatly paved, and an underground drain made to the nearest ditch, in order to carry away the pools of water and filth which now stagnated in front of the door. The little fence round it was to be repaired, and a new gate made for it, in order to keep out the pigs.

These directions were all given to the mason in a low hurried voice, rather apart from Mrs. Manvers. As they walked home, Evelyn expressed her satisfaction at the comfort the widow Green would now enjoy—"and all too," she added, "at a very small expense."

"What is it to cost?" said Mrs. Manvers.

"I do not know; but the mason assures me it shall be done very reasonably."

"Well, I think it would have been wiser," said Mrs. Manvers, "to have had an estimate before you gave your final orders; and, indeed, it would have been more prudent to have let that estimate and all the arrangement go through the

steward, as I proposed ; each article might have been considered quietly, and I might have been of some assistance to you."

"I ought at all times to be obliged by your assistance, Mrs. Manvers, when required," Evelyn replied rather quickly ; "but in this case it was quite unnecessary, as I had determined what to do ; and I should have appeared ridiculous in the eyes of my own workmen, just as if I had not been capable of giving my own orders."

"I do not quite agree with you," replied Mrs. Manvers ; "for I think that if there is anything ridiculous in the case, it is seeing a person so young and inexperienced in these matters as you are, my dear Evelyn, giving such decided orders without reflection, without consultation, and without considering the expense."

Evelyn felt the justice of the rebuke, and for some minutes they walked in silence ; at length, taking Mrs. Manvers' arm and looking up at her, she said—

"I believe you are right ; I was too precipitate, and my self-sufficiency deserves to be mortified. But after all, you, who have led an unsettled military life, cannot have much knowledge of these sort of things."

"Very probably not ; my knowledge of masonry may be very limited, and any real assistance I could have given might be but small ; but the point that I wish to place before your good understanding is, that the diffidence which leads a young person to seek for advice is not only a most winning quality, and opens the door to much useful information, but, above all, that it produces the wholesome habit of distrusting one's first impressions and checking first impulses."

"Well, well ! I shall be wiser in time ; but you will allow, that to make the widow Green's house comfortable, and a pretty object, is not a very silly impulse ; and, indeed, I should like to make all my cottages beautiful and all my people comfortable."

"Yes, my dear ; I know that those are your feelings, and that your chief object is to diffuse happiness to all around you ; but you will find that moderation is absolutely necessary to success ; for in every attempt to benefit the poor there is

one important object of which the young and ardent too often lose sight."

"And what is that?" Evelyn asked in a rather supercilious tone.

"It is this, that by giving too largely to them we diminish the incitement to exertion; whereas the object of all judicious philanthropists is to encourage honest industry, and to lead it to reward its own efforts. If people will not exert themselves, we confirm them in idleness by our assistance. Recollect also that you will soon find many demands on you, not only for charity, but to uphold your poorer tenantry, by whom, in receiving your patronage and aid, some equality in its distribution will be expected, and they will be too apt to quote what you have done for Mrs. Green."

"I am sure I shall like very much to patronise and aid all my tenants, rich and poor, as all people in my rank of life ought to do," replied Evelyn; "but above all things, whatever most tends to the general comfort of my people, for instance, the improvement of agriculture."

"Very right," replied Mrs. Manvers; "for a thrifty and skilful management of the land will promote their comfort doubly, as it is the means by which the ground is made to supply the greatest quantity of food, and at the same time to give employment to those who would otherwise be unable to procure their daily sustenance."

It was now Evelyn's daily object to go and observe the progress of her works, and Mrs. Manvers, without wounding her pride by too much direct advice, gently assisted her to ascertain that each of her orders had been properly executed; by which means she not only ensured the greater attention of the workmen to their duty, but she enabled Evelyn to acquire much useful knowledge, both of the mere practical labour, and also of the general mechanical principles by which it was guided. Evelyn had never before had an opportunity of acquiring such knowledge, and was therefore the more surprised at finding that Mrs. Manvers was able to give her much exact information on all these subjects, and to explain everything relative to them satisfactorily.

In her anxiety to have the school-house completed, Evelyn

declared she would pay double wages to the slater and the plasterer, if the whole should be finished by a certain day which she named. She was inclined to make the same offer to the carpenter also ; but Mrs. Manvers pointed out the difficulties that such imprudence would produce in regard to all works she might undertake in future, and reminded her that so early in the season such impatience was quite unnecessary, hinting at the various other expenses for which she would have to provide. Evelyn was as usual little inclined to listen to these remonstrances ; but Mrs. Manvers thought it not less her duty to represent the dangers which through her childish ardour she might incur.

The alterations and repairs of the widow Green's house soon excited the envy of others, who thought what was done for her might be done for them ; and though it was the steward's constant endeavour to prevent the tribes of petitioners, who now began to come daily, from having access to Evelyn, many eluded him, and sought from her either pecuniary aid, or promises of favours which she seldom had resolution to refuse. To give the grazing of a cow for half a year, to lend a poor family sufficient to pay the rent of their little patch of potatoes that they might begin to use them, or to remit the rent of another altogether—giving thatch to some and timber to others, for the repairs of their miserable cabins ; or to give a promise to renew the leases of some of the small holdings—all these seemed such trifles, that she felt it would be unworthy of her to hesitate.

“ Such a small boon,” she exclaimed, “ as any one of these favours that they ask, is in fact nothing when compared to the many luxuries that I enjoy ! Why then should I not share with those who are in want ? Why send away some poor honest man, probably more cast down by my hard-hearted refusal than by his own poverty, when a single word from me would have cheered his sorrows, and given fresh energy to his daily labours ? ”

“ Your feelings are right, dear Evelyn ; I would not destroy your compassion and sympathy for the poor ; but it is not less a duty to remind you, that to make promises which you may be unable to fulfil, and which, being under age, you are

not justified in making, will be actually more injurious to these poor distressed people than your referring them to the agent as you ought to do. With your present income you cannot indulge all your generous wishes : if you saw a thousand poor people in distress you could not assist them all ; some you would be forced to refuse ; there must be some proportion between your power and your benevolence."

"But it cannot be helped now, Mrs. Manvers ; what I have promised to do, I must do. And so pray come out ; this is such a fine day, that we ought to make the most of it ; and I want to consult you about the best place for a grove that I want to plant immediately, to shelter and ornament the school-house. I shall be ready in two minutes ; but I must first speak to a poor man whom I see loitering in the avenue ; I appointed him to come this morning."

Mrs. Manvers supposed he was a beggar, but Evelyn carelessly said, "Oh ! no ; he is one of my tenants, and he tells me that he is very industrious ; but that he has a very inconvenient and roundabout way to his land, and has therefore begged of me to grant him a shorter and better way to it through an adjoining field, and I promised to see about it."

"Is the field in your own hands ?"

"No : it is at present in the hands of farmer Plunket ; but if I ask him, he will of course allow poor Reilly to pass through it."

"I imagine that he will think it rather an unjust request," said Mrs. Manvers.

"Indeed, I do not agree with you, Mrs. Manvers ; that Plunket is very rich, and has a most excellent farm, and I think he ought to share a little of his advantages with his neighbour. I am determined to write to him on the subject ; but I must first ask this man one or two questions."

Mrs. Manvers saw the danger to which Evelyn was every day exposing herself by a benevolent but imprudent interference with her tenantry ; she gently reminded her that all such affairs ought to be left to the direction of her agent or the steward ; but finding all advice or warning useless at present, she prepared to accompany her, anxiously wishing that Mr. Desmond might soon come to Cromdarragh Castle.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Reminiscences of the Rebellion of '98 — Preparations for Flight — Defeat of the Insurgents — Reay Fencibles — House barricaded — Battle — Village where Mrs. Manvers' Father lived — Stratagem for its Defence — The French at Killala.

SOME days afterwards, another wet afternoon induced Evelyn to renew her request to Mrs. Manvers for more of the rebellion. "There are some parts of it," said she, "that you did not explain; I wish you would give me the history of it at length."

"Indeed, my dear, that I cannot do; for although a very deep impression was made on my mind by the complicated disturbances which spread all over the kingdom, I was too young and too giddy to understand then, or to recollect distinctly now, the circumstances that did not come immediately under my own knowledge. A few detached occurrences are all that I can attempt to relate to you, and they will be enough; why rake up the ashes of a time that was so dreadful—when some, from whom much was expected, disgraced themselves by treachery, and when many well-born and respectable people suffered an ignominious death as traitors to their king?"

"At all events," said Evelyn, "go on with your own little anecdotes. I suppose you all removed to Dublin for protection, and that your uncle insisted on sending the helpless ladies of his family to a place of safety."

"There was indeed no longer the same tie to home, my grandfather having died a few months before the visit of the French to Bantry Bay, and my uncle, therefore, pressed us to go; but my aunt would not consent to leave him; we all felt that, had we forsaken him, our own safety could not have compensated to us for the constant misery and anxiety we should have felt about him when absent.

"He considered it his duty to remain among his tenantry,

and I am well convinced that his presence did very much assist in preserving their fidelity. Indeed, there were but few instances in which a similar effect was not observed among the people where gentlemen of property and influence had courage to remain at their posts. Besides, my dear, we were not quite so helpless as you imagine. We intended to have been very useful to him had there been any occasion.

"Every precaution was taken, however, for our protection, and for that of our neighbours. A relation, who lived near us, removed with his family into my uncle's house, as being better fitted than his own for defence. Their fire-arms, plate, and valuables were brought secretly, not to attract attention, and the strength of the two houses thus united would have gallantly defended us all; happily they were never tried. However, there was one time that my uncle was so much alarmed that he actually resolved to send us away."

"What a trial to each party that separation must have been!" said Evelyn. "And what happened then? Pray go on, dear Mrs. Manvers."

"It was in the month of May," said Mrs. Manvers, "that a large body of the rebel army advanced into our county, determined to carry all before them. My uncle was more seriously alarmed then than he had been on any previous occasion, for the insurgents were said to be better disciplined, and commanded by foreign officers of skill; besides which we were at that time almost destitute of any of the regular military, for government thought that the several corps of yeomanry which had been raised were sufficient for the defence of the county, and therefore left only a very small detachment of regular troops in either of the towns in our neighbourhood. There was a remarkable hill, about eight miles from my uncle's residence, which has been always celebrated in the early history of Ireland, and therefore possessed, and still possesses, an interest in the minds of the people, which renders it almost sacred. On that hill the rebel army assembled, and from thence they were to pour down, as was understood, in our direction if not timely opposed.

"The commanding officer of the district assembled all the yeomanry corps in the neighbourhood, along with his own

small body of military, and determined to give them battle in order to stop their progress.

"A general panic was felt; a real struggle now seemed approaching, and my dear uncle would no longer listen to my aunt's wish to remain with him. He resolved, therefore, that all the females of the family should fly to Enniskillen, which was a garrison town, and the nearest place of security.

"Everything was prepared; the coach was ready, the four horses stood harnessed in the stable; we were to carry no luggage with us, each was to take only a change of linen, and we were all ready to start instantly, if such intelligence should come as my uncle expected. All these preparations were made, too, as quietly as was possible, for my uncle did not like to spread the alarm among the people, nor to have much said of our intended retreat. As long as he could, he wished, by showing confidence in the people, to preserve their fidelity."

"Dear Mrs. Manvers, what a dreadful state of suspense you must have been in! what painful anxiety! Yet still the idea of the flight was to you I suppose delightful."

"Indeed, Evelyn, the suspense, the horror of our fears for my uncle, who was, if the rebels advanced, to join the army with his corps of yeomanry; the pain of leaving him, and the probable destruction of that dear place with which our happiness was so strongly associated, almost overcame my girlish love of novelty and excitement. From time to time fresh reports came to increase our agitation. As the day wore on our anxiety increased, and I remember we all sat in almost perfect silence the whole evening of the second day of our suspense.

"Early the following morning, Sunday, came an express, with the blessed intelligence of the defeat and dispersion of the insurgents; and you may guess the thrilling gratitude to Providence which filled our hearts.

"A detachment of the Reay fencibles, marching to new quarters, arrived at a town within a very few miles of the scene of action, and its brave commanding officer, though acting against his orders, ran all risks, and, in compliance with the request of some of the officers of the yeomanry, marched instantly to lend his assistance to the small body of yeomanry

who, though disordered by the complete flight of one corps, had so firmly stood their ground, and checked the advance of the rebels. Thus sent by Providence to the relief of that faithful band, at the very moment when they must otherwise have given way, the fortune of the day was turned.

"Numbers of the poor mistaken and guilty creatures were killed, many were made prisoners, the rest were dispersed; the rout was complete, and that part of the country was thenceforward but little disturbed.

"I need scarcely tell you with what warmth of feeling all the gentlemen of the country returned thanks to that brave North Briton who commanded the fencibles, and who had thus saved us by a happy disobedience of his orders. Some military martinets, indeed, talked of trying him by a court-martial, but the acclamation and gratitude of the whole country speedily silenced such a wanton absurdity."

"You must allow, Mrs. Manvers, that the excitement of that day was enchanting. How soon did you hear the happy news? What did you do?"

"We knew nothing," she replied, "of the grand event till next morning, when an express came early to my uncle with the information. Never, Evelyn, shall I forget his running up to our room doors, and with a loud and joyful voice announcing the happy intelligence; dressed or not we hastened to open our doors, to hear it more distinctly, to make him repeat it, and to rejoice with him and with each other; but as quickly retired to our chambers, in order to pour forth our gratitude to the Almighty disposer of events for this signal instance of his protection! It was a very remarkable coincidence that the Psalms for that day (the 27th) were peculiarly appropriate. Pray read them when you are at leisure, especially the 121st and 124th—'If the Lord himself had not been on our side,' &c."

"The flight to Enniskillen, I suppose, was given up?" said Evelyn.

"There was then no occasion for it," replied Mrs. Manvers; "and yet, absurd as it must appear, I confess that, even while rejoicing at the victory, I was disappointed at missing the novelty of the flight and all the various adventures that I had expected."

"I can understand that," said Evelyn. "I think I should have felt the same. But why were you to have gone to Enniskillen for safety—why not to Dublin?"

"Because the insurgents were exactly in our way; they had stationed themselves near the Dublin road, and were spread out to a considerable extent on each side, so that we must have made a very long circuit in order to avoid them."

"And what happened afterwards? did they soon revive again?" Evelyn asked.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Manvers; "in a few weeks they made another effort, and we again underwent all the anxieties not only of suspense, but also of perpetual alarms caused by the rumours which at such times are always spread with more diligence than truth. False reports, sometimes mixed with facts, were daily brought to us by idle people who had nothing better to do than to spread alarm, and it was sometimes difficult to know what to believe. As a sample of the anxious life we then led, I will mention one day that I well remember. We heard that the military had been called out to meet the rebel army, which was drawn up for battle at a place about eight miles from us; and it was thought they were likely to advance in our direction. My uncle desired us ladies to sit up stairs all day. The windows of the rooms on the ground floor were shut and barred, and the bullet-proof planks, by which they had for a long time been doubled and strengthened at night, were duly placed that morning, lest some straggling party should attack the house. From time to time idle people brought exaggerated accounts of the battle—of the success of the rebels—of their intended march, &c., and, consequently, we spent the day in the utmost suspense, frequently at the attic windows, expecting to see the enemy marching into the lawn, and gathering round to attack the house. However, the lawn remained in all its rich and beautiful verdure, silent and still. All that I saw was now and then a few scattered fugitives hastening over a hill that was in a distant part of the demesne. I watched them for some time with a telescope, and, as they were all unarmed, and appeared hurried and miserable, we concluded that they were flying from the victorious troops. Our hopes were confirmed in the evening; the battle had been

decisive, and the poor rebels, whom I always pitied because they were misled, had been dispersed. The next morning we walked in the grounds as usual without fear, and we felt almost surprised at all the anxiety and agitation of the previous day, but truly grateful, I need scarcely tell you, to Providence for our safety."

"What a heart-stirring time it must have been, dear Mrs. Manvers! I almost wish I had seen it all myself," exclaimed Evelyn. "Was your uncle obliged to accompany the military on that day?"

"No; the scene of the battle lay in a district under the superintendence of other magistrates, and we were spared the dreadful anxiety that we must have felt if he had been there. But it was the same district in which my father resided; and I have often heard my sister describe that day as one of the most remarkable of that anxious period."

"Then I hope you will be so good as to finish its history with her account of it. How doubly interesting history would be if we could hear it from living witnesses! But take notice, Mrs. Manvers, you have so seldom mentioned your sister that I do not yet feel acquainted with her."

"Perhaps hereafter you may; though I do not think you are ever likely to meet, for she lives far, far from this—in Canada," said Mrs. Manvers, sighing. After a pause, she continued: "I must first tell you that my father was a clergyman, and resided at a small village not many miles from the place where that action was fought. All the military quartered there and in the neighbourhood were called out early on that morning, as well as the yeomanry corps, led by their captain, who was the principal person in the village and a magistrate. Many of the inhabitants followed, well armed, to join, with their loyal though perhaps unskilful bravery, in defence of their property and of the common cause. Much depended on the issue of this battle; if the rebels were victorious, they would probably march direct to that little village to seize upon a large store of arms and ammunition deposited there. But, Evelyn, while all the able-bodied men were thus marched off, what was to become of these stores, which would have been an easy prey to any straggling parties of the enemy? In the centre

of the village, which stood on a hill, four high roads met, and there a field-piece had been placed ; a few old men established themselves round it as a guard, and they were headed by the vicar, my dear father, the most mild and peaceful of men ! My sister, who was then a child, enjoyed the novelty of the scene, though catching a little of the general alarm : and you would be amused at the vivacity with which she describes the singular group assembled under our venerable father as a garrison for the village. In order to give a martial appearance to his little regiment of ancients, when seen from the neighbouring hills, all the old caps, red jackets, and waistcoats of the militia and yeomanry, and even the women's red petticoats, were put in requisition ; and such was the effect of this skilful stratagem, that some of the flying parties from the battle, who were approaching, were seen to pause, and then cross over into another line of road. On these occasions swords and muskets, and even polished spits and pokers, were made to gleam in the sun whenever my father gave the signal by brandishing his long bright telescope."

"What general joy there must have been," said Evelyn, "when all those scattered parties had passed by, when the troops returned victorious, and the whole village was restored to its usual tranquillity ! But how enraged the rebels must have been when they afterwards discovered your father's masterly little *ruse de guerre* ! Did it not produce ill will towards him in the country ?"

"Oh, no ! there could be no feelings towards my father but those of respect and confidence ; perhaps the poor fugitives were glad that they had been saved an additional crime ; as to the villagers and neighbouring families who were defenceless, they felt the advantage they derived from his exertions, and loved him more than ever."

"Were there any more battles, or disturbances, after the rebels had received that second beating ?"

"No, not in our part of the country," said Mrs. Manvers.

"In a few weeks everything appeared so quiet, that the idea of a rebellion seemed like a dream ; and we left home without apprehension to visit a friend in the west, and travelled there, and, having spent a happy fortnight, returned home without

perceiving any symptoms of disturbance or agitation among the people. But the calm was short, for, in a few days after we had been settled at home, the French landed at Killala; the rebels again mustered in great numbers, and their united force—invaders and insurgents—advanced into the heart of the country; but their complete defeat, at the battle of Ballinamuck, in the county of Longford, was the closing scene of the Rebellion of 1798. Throughout all parts of Ireland the people gradually became quiet; some suffered, of course, for treason, but many were pardoned, and for a few years all was tranquil, and all parties felt the benefit of repose.

“But before I finish my recollections of those times, so long gone by, I must say that, notwithstanding the misguided feelings of the multitude who had been seduced from their allegiance, and the lawless violence which those who promoted the rebellion had tried to encourage, there were many beautiful instances of the attachment of servants to their masters, and of the tenantry to their landlords. The poor Irish are, indeed, too easily excited, and, when their passions are worked up, too ready to commit violence, yet they have really warm and generous hearts.”

“I am sure of it, I know and feel it,” exclaimed Evelyn; “and I trust the mutual attachment between me and my dear countrymen will never cease.”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The 18th Chapter of Deuteronomy — A Prophet like unto Thee — Parallel between Jesus Christ and Moses.

"Now, Mrs. Manvers," said Evelyn, one Sunday afternoon, "I want to ask you about a passage in Deuteronomy. I think, as I advance in my present search through the Old Testament, that my mind opens to the consistency and beauty of the history, but still I want your assistance"—and, opening the Bible, she pointed to v. 18 and 19 of the 18th of Deuteronomy—"This passage is surely prophetic of Christ?"

"It is considered," Mrs. Manvers replied, "to contain a more express declaration of the character and office of Christ than any you have yet noticed. At the same time that the Israelites were cautioned to beware of false prophets, they were assured that God would raise up to them faithful instructors—one in particular whose coming should be looked for, and to whose words they should hearken."

"And it appears," said Evelyn, "that there was a general expectation, about the very time of our Lord's coming, that a glorious prophet should appear. 'This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world'—said the Galilean Jews, after the miracle of the loaves and fishes; and shortly afterwards in Jerusalem, you may recollect, we are told that the people again cried out, 'Of a truth this is *the* Prophet.'"

"Very well applied, indeed, Evelyn," said Mrs. Manvers; "both St. Peter and St. Stephen expressly refer to that particular passage as having been fulfilled in Christ; and our Lord himself having constantly appealed to the writings of Moses as bearing witness of Him, we are encouraged to search in them for prophetic passages, which the history of our Lord shows to have been amply fulfilled."

"Yes," replied Evelyn; "and as I see, in the little book

you gave me, that Deuteronomy is considered to foretell the coming of the Messiah rather more distinctly than any other book of the Old Testament, except those of the regular prophets, I should like much, if you have time now, to go through the different parts of this particular prophecy with you. First then, 'I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee.'"

"As a prophet then," said Mrs. Manvers, "it is scarcely necessary to remind you that Christ foretold the treatment he himself was to receive—to be denied, crucified, buried, and then raised from the grave. He foretold also the destruction of the city and temple at Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, and the dissemination of the Gospel throughout the Gentile-world."

"Yes, indeed," said Evelyn, "I know that is all foretold by Christ in the Gospels."

"In that character too we see Him making known the Divine will," continued Mrs. Manvers, "and teaching the way of salvation; unfolding, as it were, the method of the sinner's acceptance, and giving hope to those who had none."

"In the next place," said Evelyn, "as Jesus took our nature upon himself and was raised up from among the people, they may, I suppose, be strictly called his brethren. But, Mrs. Manvers, how shall we interpret the expression 'like unto thee'—that is, unto Moses—how shall we venture to consider the Saviour like a human creature?"

"Though all comparisons," replied Mrs. Manvers, "must fall infinitely short of His glorious attributes, yet a likeness may be traced in some points—for instance, in the care of his people, who, though believers, are in bondage to sin; and to accomplish the purpose of mercy, He condescends to be our leader, and offers to conduct us through the intricate road of life. Strangers and pilgrims in this world, we are perplexed by the variety of its tempting paths; but He encourages us to resist those seductions, and to endure all privations, in the prospect of the glorious country before us. As the Israelites were under the guidance of Moses, so are we under the protection of Christ; and as they were wanderers for years in the wilderness, so are we wanderers in a far wider and more

dangerous wilderness, amidst trials of every kind, but with the hope of rejoicing when, at the close of life, we arrive, as it were, at the banks of the Jordan—that is, at our heavenly rest. He Himself will be our guiding pillar by day and our leading light by night; for if we study his word we shall find precepts to direct us in all difficulties. If we are burthened with sin, He encourages our humble applications to himself; for He says, ‘Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden.’ Moses interceded for the people when they were overwhelmed with terror—Christ mediates for us, as it was foretold, ‘He ever liveth to make intercession for us.’”

“How satisfactorily you go through each part, dear Mrs. Manvers!” exclaimed Evelyn. “Next then, as a lawgiver?”

“I think you could scarcely have required my assistance in studying any of these points,” said Mrs. Manvers; “but it is an interesting subject; and it is a peculiar gratification to be your companion in such a search when it engages your heart and attention. As a lawgiver, Jesus Christ not only confirms the authority of the law that was delivered by Moses, and explains and enforces it in all its extent and spirituality, but he gives us new laws of far greater importance. He sets before us a larger view of our duties, and He attaches to his injunctions rewards and punishments stretching into eternity, and therefore of infinitely greater weight than the promises and menaces held out by Moses. He gives us precepts of holiness of life—of obedience, and of sincerity and purity of heart, which are indispensable. And again, in his meekness we may find another parallel characteristic. The forbearance and meekness of Moses, during a long series of trials, are proverbial; but no trials ever equalled those of our Lord; and never was there such gentleness and love as He showed without intermission, even to the most ungrateful and malignant. When reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not. Let us then frequently inquire of ourselves, What is our spirit under trials? Have we learned of Him to be meek and holy of heart?”

“I know,” said Evelyn, “that Moses was distinguished above other men by his having direct communication with God; yet how different from that of Christ with the Father!”

“True; we are told that Jehovah spoke mouth to mouth with Moses,” said Mrs. Manvers; “but all comparison fails when we recollect that Christ was in the bosom of the Father, partaker of His counsels, and one with Him. In Him we are told are hidden the treasures of knowledge; and accordingly He did act and speak as the Lord of the Creation. And you may recollect that St. Paul says, ‘This man was accounted worthy of more glory than Moses; inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house; for every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God.’”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

New Plantation — The Robin and the Eagle — Different Races of Birds
— Three that do not fly — Visit from the Vincents.

MONDAY's post brought to Evelyn the happy intelligence that her father and Mrs. Desmond would come to her in the middle of the week, and would bring the children with them. She was therefore more than ever anxious that some of her improvements should be completed; and on Monday, as she had ordered, the plantation near the school-house was begun. The situation was well chosen, but the ground was not in proper order, and it was not the right season for planting; of this Mrs. Manvers tried to convince her—so also did the gardener; but Evelyn, anxious to indulge a present fancy, like many who are older but not wiser, would not hear of delay, though she had already learned the folly of such experiments by the fate of the plants which had been removed.

There was a part of the old gardens at Cromdarragh Castle, called the Wilderness, which was used as a nursery for young forest-trees; and from thence she desired the new grove to be supplied. The gardener looked very sad at the destruction of so many fine young trees; and Mrs. Manvers made one more effort to save them by reminding her that Mr. Desmond had said one day, when talking of projected plantations, that it was very important to their growth that the ground should be in proper order, well trenched, or ploughed and enriched; for which reason it was highly advantageous to have a crop of potatoes first in the ground where trees were to be planted.

"Yes, I recollect; but really I do not see how potatoes can assist the growth of trees," said Evelyn.

"Probably not from any virtue in themselves, but a previous crop may nevertheless be useful; first, in improving the soil by the manure necessary for their culture; and secondly, by

pulverising the ground, so that the little fibres of the roots can easily make their way, whereas, if the earth be hard and stiff, they must find a sad difference between it and the nursery they have just quitted ; much like infants, who, deprived of suitable food, languish and die."

Evelyn laughed at the comparison between young children and young trees, but declared she must have her trees planted, and that it was always better to try every experiment oneself. "The best way to learn is by experience," said she.

"We should find it, however, a tedious mode of gaining knowledge," replied Mrs. Manvers, "if we did not combine with it the result of the experiments that others have tried."

"Yes, I know—and those we have tried ourselves," said she, smiling at the recollection of her garden ; "but as the school-house will be soon finished, I cannot defer making my little plantation ; and I wish that all should look complete and nice before my father comes ; and what do a few trees signify, supposing they should not thrive ? So let us lose no more time." During this discussion the workmen were taking up the trees ; and the gardener now went to superintend their being placed in the cart, grumbling and muttering as he went along, "What do a few trees signify, indeed ! What a sin it is to give up these beautiful young trees to certain death ! my old master would never have let her do this ! But what could he expect at all when he put such a child, as I may say she is, at the head of his property ; and, still worse, to have the management of her garden ? But come, I must do my best for them, and at least they shan't want for water."

Evelyn, accompanied by Mrs. Manvers, then went to the field adjoining the school, where they stayed a long time superintending the plantation ; but it did not proceed as rapidly as she had expected, because the gardener, anxious to give his poor trees every chance in his power, insisted on the holes being made very wide as well as deep, and on the earth being well broken and crumbled among the fibres, and their being well drenched with water.

While those operations were in progress Evelyn amused herself in observing the variety of little birds that followed the spade, each kind watching for some favourite worm or

insect; coming timidly—scarcely venturing near enough to seize their prize—and then generally fluttering away before they had reached it; all, except the robin, who—whether from a greater portion of natural courage, or from a peculiar fondness for man—seems less alarmed at approaching him, and is more forward and daring, than any of the other small birds.

The robins hopped up quite close to the workmen, and sometimes actually into the hole they were digging; so that Evelyn, who watched them with much interest, was at once fearful of their being hurt, and delighted at the expertness with which they avoided the spade.

“I saw a singular instance of the boldness and cunning of the robin,” said Mrs. Manvers “a few years ago, at a place where I was on a visit. There was an eagle in a cage formed of iron wire: he was, of course, supplied with abundance of food, which lay in the bottom of the cage, and, the wires being very open, many a little bird was tempted to snatch some of it away. One or two, that mistook his dignified repose for indolence, were seized by the talons of the king of birds and instantly punished for their temerity. But there was one little robin, who not only fearlessly entered the cage, but, when the eagle’s head was turned away, helped itself with the coolest audacity to some portion of the eagle’s food. When the glaring eye turned towards it, the little creature looked up, and met it with a kind of steady composure, as if triumphing in the sympathy it knew the proud eagle would feel in its courage: and the result fully justified its reliance on his generosity; for, at last, it was suffered to come and go when it pleased, and to share in the noble bird’s food unmolested.”

“Dear little confiding creatures!” said Evelyn; “I delight in that bright look, which gives them such a sensible and animated appearance. What a contrast there is between the different races of birds!—some so small and delicate, others so coarse and large, such as the ostrich and the condor.”

“Yes, and some so rapid in their flight,” said Mrs. Manvers; “while others, again, possessing, like the penguin, only imperfect wings, are unable to fly. In the last voyage

to the Antarctic regions multitudes of birds were seen upon an iceberg at a great distance from the land. Most of them were of the smaller species of that singular family; and even several young ones, scarcely fledged. But there were also many of the great penguin, which, with their grave and stately step and their short legs, looked like men walking in procession. One, which stood four feet six inches in height, was caught, and found to weigh seventy-six pounds.

"How, then, could those heavy creatures run away from their pursuers?" said Evelyn.

"Heavy as they were," replied Mrs. Manvers, "their activity was astonishing, in leaping and scrambling up the sides of almost perpendicular icy cliffs by the assistance of their heavy wings or flappers."

"How very curious," exclaimed Evelyn, "that wings should be given to them for any other use than that of flying!"

"As to that," said Mrs. Manvers, "there are three birds in South America which do not fly, but employ their wings for other purposes. First, the penguin, which, on shore, uses them, as I have told you, for jumping and scrambling; but in the water they act as fins, enabling it to dive, and twist and turn itself round and round, with the most surprising dexterity. Next, the ostrich, which spreads its wings like the sails of a vessel, so that the wind helps to blow it along the sandy desert; though, indeed, it scarcely seems to want any external aid, for it is so swift as to beat the fleetest horse, and so strong as to run with a couple of boys, or a heavy negro, on its back. And, thirdly, there is the great loggerhead-goose, or duck, with its short wings, which help to flap it along the water, something like the paddles of a steam-vessel; and it is therefore called the steamer-goose."

"Where is that last singular creature found?"

"Chiefly in Patagonia and the Falkland isles," replied Mrs. Manvers. "From the rapidity with which they make their way, partly running, swimming, and splashing in shallow water, they used formerly to be called the race-horse goose, but now they are more appropriately termed steamers. It has been remarked, that, when all these birds are pluming them-

selves together in the evening, they make the same odd mixture of sounds which the various frogs do in tropical regions."

Evelyn was going to ask Mrs. Manvers some questions about the habits of these three singular species of birds, but at that moment, perceiving a carriage in the avenue, they hastened home to receive their visitors.

They were Mr. and Mrs. Vincent, and their daughter who had been from home when they met Evelyn at Ardscar. They had deferred their visit till the return of Miss Vincent, and now came to invite Mrs. Manvers and Evelyn to spend a day with them the latter end of the week. But as Evelyn expected Mr. and Mrs. Desmond just at that time, she was obliged to decline the invitation.

Mr. Vincent said he hoped the visit would only be deferred; hinting that he would try to persuade Mr. Desmond and his family to accompany Miss O'Brien and her friend the following week to his place—The Cliffs.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Arrival of the Desmonds — Visit from Mr. White — Mabel's Idea of a Castle — Independence.

THE day on which the Desmonds were to come to Cromdaragh Castle had been looked forward to with much pleasure by Mrs. Manvers and Evelyn; and yet with some little anxiety, that increased as the time approached at which they were expected.

Mrs. Manvers felt fearful that Mr. Desmond might think she had not sufficiently exerted herself to improve and guide her wayward charge; and the pain of being considered unmindful of her duty would have been very severe. Evelyn, on the other hand, was most desirous that all she had been doing, all the little changes she had made, should be approved of by her father and Mrs. Desmond; and while she never allowed herself to doubt of the good sense and good taste of her own plans, she was the more vexed when she recollected that the complete failure of some of them was too evident.

She expected her friends early in the day: hours passed away, however, and each hour increased the sensitive anxiety she experienced. Many a time had she sauntered round the garden, or up and down in the shade of the lime-tree walk, listening for the sound of the rumbling wheels. At last she began to fear that some accident had happened, and was on the point of sending off her coachman to assist them in the dilemma she had fancied, when, to her great relief, the carriage was discerned at some distance, and at length the whole party safely arrived.

Evelyn welcomed them with real pleasure, affectionately embraced Mrs. Desmond and her father, and then, turning to the children, said, "I am delighted to have dear Mabel and Gerald here at last. Dear Mabel, let me give you a hearty kiss in this castle, where I have been longing to have you!"

"And which I have been longing to see," said Mabel, returning her embrace.

"I fear it will seem very gloomy to you, Mabel—so different from cheerful Clonallen."

"Perhaps a little gloomy," said Mabel, "but very grand, and well suited to those fine old trees, and to its situation—looking down so proudly on the surrounding country."

"And what a curious thing, sister Evelyn, that you, so young a girl, should be mistress of such a large castle!" cried Gerald. "Mabel, let us run down to those fine old trees, at which you are gazing!"

"There is not time now, my dear boy," said his mother, who was still standing on the steps talking with Mrs. Manvers, and admiring the beauty of the view; "to-morrow we shall walk about and see all that your sister has been doing."

"Well, my dear Evelyn," said Mr. Desmond, taking her to one of the deep bay-windows of the hall, "I must see how you look, and how your long tête-à-tête with Mrs. Manvers has agreed with you: I do not think you look unhappy."

"Oh, papa! I could not look unhappy now, when I am so rejoiced at your arrival. Besides," added she, colouring and hesitating a little, "I am so glad to feel that in one thing I am improved since you and my mother were here. I am really shocked when I recollect my prejudices about her, and my rudeness. Indeed, her forbearance and her kindness to me, during my visit at Clonallen, completely conquered me."

Mr. Desmond congratulated his daughter on such a happy change; and, after a few questions about Mrs. Manvers, they turned from the window and joined the rest of the party in the cheerful little morning room, and were conversing with all the eagerness natural to long-separated friends, when the door opened, and visitors were announced—Mr. White the curate, and Mr. T——, a friend of his.

They apologised for the lateness of the visit, but Mr. White had been riding with his friend all day, anxious to show him whatever was remarkable in the country, and therefore could not pass the castle without introducing him to Miss O'Brien, as well as to a place so ancient and still in such excellent preservation.

Mr. T—— was much interested in Irish antiquities, and soon got into conversation with Mr. Desmond about the towers, cairns, cromleacs, and barrows in the neighbourhood.

Evelyn endeavoured to catch what they were saying; but, sitting at a distance from them, she could only hear a few words now and then, when her mother or sister was not speaking.

These broken sentences excited her curiosity, and she determined that as soon as Mr. White and his companion took their leave she would ask her father to repeat what he had been saying; but as they departed the dressing-bell rang, and put a stop for the present to her inquiries.

The evening passed off cheerfully. Evelyn was kind and attentive to Mrs. Desmond, and at the same time so anxious to make her brother and sister feel happy, that she proposed various amusements for them—old plays as well as new, for children are not so easily tired of what they know as grown-up people, and are always willing to go over a favourite play or to listen to a favourite story again and again.

Mrs. Manvers, who excelled in magic music, played it for a long time; and, as the whole party joined in these amusements, Gerald enjoyed his father's mistakes while wandering about the room in obedience to the music as it gently sank or loudly swelled.

In the course of the evening there was some lively conversation; but Evelyn was anxious and less at ease than usual. While she wished to amuse Gerald and Mabel, she was yet fearful of not being sufficiently dignified as mistress of the castle; and this produced an amusing variety in her manner—at one time forgetting all but the momentary diversion in which she joined heartily, but at another trying to show that she was quite a woman in mind and manner. Her father, however, amidst her little inconsistencies, was pleased at observing that her behaviour to Mrs. Manvers was far less repulsive than when he had last seen them together.

"I hope to-morrow may be fine, papa," said Evelyn; "for I am anxious to show my school-house to you and my mother. It is nearly finished."

"You have a great deal to show us," said Mabel. "I

long to see all the castle—with its towers, and fosse, and postern, its battlements and portcullis, and all the curious places one reads of in the castles of ancient times.”

“You will be sadly disappointed then, my poor Mabel,” said Mr. Desmond, smiling at the idea she had formed of Cromdarragh Castle; “for, old as it still appears, it was modernised by Sir Connor’s father, who filled up the fosse, closed the donjon, and deprived it of all its warlike interest.”

“For my part,” said Gerald, “I want to have some boating on that nice lake. How delightful it is, Evelyn, to have such a lake of your own, and a nice boat too!”

“Yes,” said Mrs. Desmond, “and a much more useful one than your little favourite skiff; and yet yours probably gives you more pleasure than Evelyn derives from hers. Can you guess why?”

“One good reason,” said Gerald, “is because I am allowed to use my boat whenever you and papa think me a good boy; but my poor sister has nobody to tell her when she is good or naughty.”

Evelyn laughed, and good-humouredly said, “Or perhaps you should say, is too heedless of it when she is told. But you have another advantage in yours, Gerald, that I cannot have.”

“What can that be, sister? I thought you were mistress of everything you could wish for. But I see; you cannot use it without people to row you; so that, after all, you are not quite mistress of your own boat. Surely you and Mrs. Manvers might each take an oar.”

“I have heard of some ladies who could row,” said Evelyn; “but I have not tried yet, and I doubt that Mrs. Manvers would trust herself with me.”

“I hope you have no ambition to try that occupation,” said Mr. Desmond; “for, besides its being rather unfeminine, it might be very hazardous here, and all the satisfaction you might ever derive from the pleasure of boating, independently of assistance, would but ill compensate for the danger you might run. In this; and in most lakes which are surrounded by hills, heavy squalls of wind come pouring out of the valleys, without giving any warning to an inexperienced eye,

and producing such a sudden agitation of the water, that you would find your boat very difficult to manage."

"Well, papa," said Evelyn, "I will not attempt to row by myself, though, as Gerald says, it is disagreeable to be dependent on boatmen."

"Not more so, I should think, than on servants and horses for a drive," said Mr. Desmond. "Just fancy your love of independence leading you into the stable to harness your horses, and then perhaps to ride postilion when you wish to make a little excursion."

The thought was so droll, it was irresistible ; Gerald's laugh was loud and long ; and Evelyn, though at first hesitating between injured dignity and the diversion she felt at the idea, gradually yielded to the latter, and joined in the laugh.

"At all events," said Mrs. Desmond, "we can walk where and when we please ; here, at least, we are independent of footmen to attend us, and I shall very much enjoy a walk to Evelyn's school to-morrow."



CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Plantation — Liberty in Switzerland — Schoolhouse — Faults in the Work — Evelyn vexed and silent — Evelyn's Application to Mr. Plunket — The Garden — Determination of Character.

THE next morning was favourable, and the whole party prepared to walk early.

"And now for the garden," said Mabel.

"Of course you have not begun any of your projected improvements in it?" said Mrs. Desmond.

"Ah! my poor garden!" said Evelyn, colouring. "It is better not to inquire about it."

"Come, then, let us go to the school-house," said Mrs. Desmond, "and we will not think of the garden now."

Mrs. Desmond was delighted with the pretty fields through which their path lay, and with the rich beauty of the trees in the groves and hedgerows. When they reached the school-house they found that the workmen had retired for their hour of rest, and Mr. Desmond examined the building without interruption. His quick eye ran rapidly over the masonry of the walls, the course of the flues, the pitch of the roof, and quality of the slates. He approved of the execution in general, but, on walking round the house to see how the drains were carried off, he exclaimed, "Heyday! what is all this?" for he could not repress his astonishment on perceiving the new plantation which Evelyn had lately made, and the miserable plight of which, notwithstanding the oceans of water poured about the trees and shrubs by her indefatigable gardener, was but too apparent in the hanging leaves of the evergreens and the yellow tips of the little fir-trees. Evelyn felt the double mortification of having at once failed in her object, and having proved to her father her ignorance and impatience. Mr. Desmond allowed that her new plantation was prettily

situated ; but added, "I am surprised that neither the gardener nor steward should have informed you of the proper time for transplanting trees."

Evelyn's eyes had, in pure vexation, been turned away from the trees ; but now, hastily raising them to her father, and looking at him with an open though distressed countenance, she exclaimed, "Oh, do not blame them or any one but me. I was told it was much too early. Mrs. Manvers and every one wished to prevent me ; but I was so anxious to finish all, that I did not mind them ;—and—and," looking down as she added the last words—"I fear — too proud to be taught or— even advised."

"If you have learnt that, dear Evelyn, by this plantation, we may rather rejoice at the sacrifice of a few trees, instead of lamenting them ;—provided always that those penitent impressions continue."

"Yes, papa, I must try to hope they may ; but I have to acknowledge that this is not the only folly I have committed lately."

"Well, well ; it will be time enough to talk of your other little follies when we discover them. You know it is one of the good laws of Great Britain, and happily of Ireland too, that the culprit need not criminate himself."

"But, after all," said Gerald, "why should not these foolish little trees grow now as well as a month hence?"

"Possibly some of them may live," replied Mr. Desmond ; "but experience teaches us that trees should not be disturbed till the sap has subsided and till the summer-shoots have become firm, by which time the buds for the succeeding year have been formed. The ascending sap in the following spring will then be equal to the quantity requisite for the growth of the tree ; but if this operation of nature is checked by a too early removal of the tree before the provision for its vegetation had been made, the fibres of the roots will have no power to convey the necessary nourishment."

"But dear papa," said Mabel, "Evelyn has only taken the liberty of trying a fair experiment with her own trees, as there are no such laws in this country as there are, mamma told me, in some parts of Switzerland, where people must not

do as they please with their own vineyards: they must not begin even their own vintage till everybody else is ready to begin: they must not kill a calf or a turkey without permission; and I suppose, if poor Evelyn lived there, she could not transplant her trees without consulting the authorities."

"And that is called a free country!" cried Gerald. "Why, we have much more freedom here, where my house is my castle, and I may do as I will with my own."

"But, Gerald, you have no house of your own; how can you say it is your castle?"

"Nonsense, Mabel! how precise you are! I do not mean mine in particular, but that all men here have that privilege, and therefore I consider that some day it will be mine."

"Come, then, Gerald," said Mr. Desmond, "you shall now have the privilege of opening this door for your sister, that we may see her school-house within as well as without; I feel particularly interested about it, as she planned it all herself."

"And drew the plan for it herself," said Mabel.

"And how much more interested must Evelyn herself be!" said Mrs. Desmond. "Whatever has exercised our understanding and involved our voluntary labour becomes a favourite object, even though we may not always succeed to the extent of our ambition. So this little building, we may take for granted, is a favourite object with her, as she conceived the plan, and persevered in drawing and arranging it till she had conquered all her difficulties."

"Why, Mabel never finds any difficulty in drawing a plan, nor do I," said Gerald.

"You both were early taught that art; Evelyn was not: but she applied her understanding to the task, mastered the difficulties, and succeeded. And hereafter, when she gives rewards for industry at this school, she may well recollect the pleasure she had felt in her own successful industry."

The school-room and the adjoining apartments were then examined, and on the whole approved. All the mason-work seemed well and honestly done; but Mr. Desmond found numerous faults in the carpenter's work, which Evelyn had not perceived. How could she?—for she did not understand the

matter at all, though she had gone so continually to look at the progress of the work. The self-sufficient are more deeply mortified than the modest when their ignorance or their mistakes are discovered; and Evelyn, who had never doubted that she could see as well as anybody else if carpenter's work was neatly finished, was not only humbled but vexed by the justice of her father's remarks, and by the detection of her ignorance—she felt angry with the carpenter for his misconduct, and piqued with her father for having shown how little she understood of the business she had undertaken. "And Mrs. Manvers, too! with all her pretended knowledge, why had she not pointed out all these faults?" Evelyn said to herself. On leaving the school-house she took another way home, but not by the widow Green's house, as she had intended.

"I thought you meant to show the widow Green's cottage to your father," said Mrs. Manvers in a low voice to Evelyn.

"No, I have changed my mind; not to-day."

"But as it is so near, would it not be wise to let him see what the workmen have been doing there?"

"No, not now," replied Evelyn in a voice that betrayed the soreness of her feelings. "I suppose that, too, is all wrong. I wonder that nobody else could see the bad work of that odious carpenter. I wonder that you ——."

Here Evelyn was interrupted by Mrs. Desmond, who said they were all ready to go, if she was. "Quite ready, indeed," said she, and led the way in silence through different paths and fields from those they had passed through.

"What a pretty view!" exclaimed one.

"How nice those distant white cottages look under the tall trees!" said another.

"The cabins," said Mr. Desmond, "about here have improved so much in their appearance, and look so much more comfortable, that I think they may now be fairly dignified with the appellation of cottages. I suppose this is all your doing, Evelyn?"

Evelyn made no reply: her mind had not yet recovered from the humiliating effects of Mr. Desmond's remarks, and she was also struck with the consciousness of injustice to Mrs.

Manvers, whose opinions and advice she had always so haughtily rejected.

In the mean time her silence began to excite the surprise of the whole party; and though Mabel and Gerald talked abundantly, still the sound of Evelyn's voice was missed by all. Mrs. Desmond sat down on the stump of an old tree to rest for a few minutes and to admire the view. They were on the side of a small hill, looking down on the perfectly placid lake with its beautiful banks, while behind all was a range of dark blue mountains. The air was still; the birds lent their gentle melody; and altogether it was a scene calculated to calm the most troubled breast. No wonder, then, that Evelyn's mind was in some degree recalled from the disagreeable subjects on which she had been pondering.

"I asked you some time ago, Evelyn, but I believe you did not hear me, if you had done anything to that little hamlet yonder—it looks so much better than when I last saw it?"

"Yes, papa, I have been trying to improve those houses, but I begin to fear uselessly," said Evelyn gravely.

"I hope not," said her father; "for no doubt, in making the outside appearance so much better, you have endeavoured to give the inhabitants some idea of comfort by the neatness and improvement of the inside of their houses."

"I wished to do so; but though endeavouring to do some good, I suppose I have done it all wrong!"

"Why should you suppose so, my dear? Your intentions were good—you acted to the best of your judgment—and when you had reason to distrust that, you naturally consulted your steward, or applied to your agent, Mr. Carey?" said Mr. Desmond, as he turned his eyes on Evelyn, and now first perceived in her countenance the traces of her recent vexation.

"No, papa, I did not consult them."

"And why, my dear?"

"Because the steward is so much afraid of my laying out too much money—that I never apply to him. The agent has not been here lately, I believe—at least I have heard nothing of him since he called one day, and then I did not see him, as I had no particular business for him."

"You should have seen him, however," replied Mr. Des-

mond, "and should certainly have consulted him or the steward on every business of that kind. I do not understand, Evelyn, why you should object to doing things economically, for you must perceive that economy would give you more means of doing good, and of making the improvements you wish."

"Indeed, papa, Mr. Carey makes so many difficulties, that if I listened to him I should do nothing, and all, forsooth, because Mr. Driver said so much to him about the expense of the former establishment at Cromdarragh; and as to the steward, he is still more tiresome about money."

"And yet, my dear child, it would be more tiresome if, having wasted it, you found yourself without any."

Evelyn sighed as Mr. Desmond said these words, and thought it but too likely to be the case.

"But who is this man coming to you with his hat off and with so many bows?"

"He is a poor farmer in a very small way—a tenant who asked me to do him a little favour, and I wrote about it to his next neighbour."

The man did not advance; for when he saw that Mr. Desmond, who was sitting on a stone near Evelyn, was one of the party, he quickly turned into another path.

"I thought that bowing man was coming to speak to Evelyn," said Mrs. Desmond.

"I thought so too," replied Mr. Desmond; "but I think he changed his mind when he saw that I was one of the party. I do not like that; I think he knows that he ought not to have asked that favour."

Gerald offered to run after him and call him back.

"No, my dear boy, let the man go his way, and let us go ours, for we have sat here long enough; and while we walk, Evelyn, you can tell me about this man and what you are trying to obtain for him."

"He tells me," said she, "that he has a very inconvenient way to his little farm—a great round for his car to get from it to the high road; and all he asked was, that I should desire Mr. Plunket, the rich farmer, to let him have a passage through some of his fields to the road, which I am told—for I have not seen the place—would be a great advantage to the

poor man, and a trifle for the other, who is so rich, to give : it would be but justice, I think, where riches are so unequally divided."

"It is not such a trifle as you think. But pray what answer did Mr. Plunket send to your demand?"

"I have received none yet; I imagined the poor man was bringing it when I saw him coming towards me."

"And I imagine," said Mr. Desmond, "that he is conscious he had done wrong in asking you to interfere, and therefore cunningly avoided any explanation while I was present."

"Wrong, papa! Do you really think there could be anything wrong in that? is it not the duty of landlords to attend to the interests of their tenantry?"

"And if you, Evelyn, were in the place of Mr. Plunket, would you think it just to be desired to open a way through your fields, without any compensation for the loss and inconvenience; and by one who was not acquainted with all the circumstances, nor with the situation of each farm? for you have only heard what this bowing friend of yours thought fit to tell you. You should first have seen Mr. Plunket—if, indeed, you ought to have done anything about the matter."

"I thought it would be troublesome to him to come to me—and—very troublesome to me to speak to him about it."

"When you condescend to ask a favour, my dear, you ought to take the trouble to do so in the best manner. Before anything else is done, it would, I think, be wise to go and see the premises and judge for yourself."

"With all my heart, papa, if you will go with me."

"I will, my dear—not to promote what I believe is a bad cause, but to make you understand better the real nature of the case. It is a delicate thing to interfere with the conduct of people towards each other, or with either their property or rights. Mankind must always be unequal in wealth and prosperity. To relieve the poor ourselves, to increase the comforts of our tenants, and to render their little farms more commodious, are indeed our duties; but to misapply our influence, and insist on one of them giving way to the fancy of another, is actual tyranny."

"Of all things I should be most sorry to be suspected of being tyrannically disposed."

"Yes, I am sure you would; but you have much to learn before you can wisely manage the property of which you have so suddenly become mistress; and believe me, my dear child, though all your motives are good, it would be far more prudent for you to leave all these small affairs at present to your agent; he is the proper person to direct and manage them; and by consulting him, yet keeping your eyes open, you will acquire habits of business, and the happy art of being just as well as generous; but let us say no more on the subject now."

As they approached the castle Mabel again expressed a wish to see the garden. Evelyn assented, but added with a sigh, "I fear you will find it only another proof of my folly."

"What has gone wrong about your garden?" Mr. Desmond asked.

"My impatience to improve its appearance made me remove many plants and shrubs at a wrong season, and in too hot weather, and you can guess the consequences."

"But after all," said Mrs. Manvers, "many of them have recovered; and, since the last rains, they do not look nearly so miserable."

Evelyn then led them into the garden: that garden, which she had once hoped would excite general admiration, could now only be entitled to pity or ridicule; and to a proud mind, pity is, perhaps, more galling than rebuke. However, nobody laughed: though some of the plants were dying, and all were drooping, yet several of the rose-trees had begun to bud afresh, and Mabel tried to comfort her sister by describing the barbarous usage that she and Gerald had often inflicted on plants in their own little gardens, notwithstanding which they had recovered. She advised her to cut down some of the rose-trees and give them a covering of rich earth, which would ensure their restoration. The gardener had already done much to save the credit of his young mistress; many dead plants he had taken away, and carefully settled the ground; withered branches had been cut off, everything trimmed in his best manner, and, on the whole, the garden did not look so

miserable as she had feared. The annuals, which had been sown tolerably early, were now in good blossom; a few carnations, which had not been touched, were in full beauty, and tufts of lilac cyclamen were peeping up and beautifying the borders.

Evelyn had the pleasure of showing Mabel the places where she had budded the different varieties of roses on the sweetbrier hedge, and Mabel, delighted at her success, eagerly pointed out to her father how well the buds were taking.

"I think," said Mr. Desmond, "that you have laid out your garden with considerable taste, and that your alterations appear to have been judicious. I recollect that many of the plants and shrubs were overgrown and spoiling each other; and though I might, for old acquaintance sake, have wished to preserve them, I confess that the thinning them has been an improvement. I see you still have a fine background of rhododendrons and other American shrubs."

"Yes, fortunately," she replied, "I did not meddle with them nor with this sweetbrier-hedge," presenting a bit to him as she spoke; "though I must acknowledge I was very near removing it; but Mrs. Manvers was so kind as to save it by telling me by whom it had been planted."

"Thank you, my dear child; it is very sweet, and the sentiment which restrained your hand is still sweeter to me. The scent of this brings before my mind times long gone by. Yes, you are right to cherish every token you can find of her who made, and then delighted in, this garden."

Evelyn, giving a beautiful rose to Mrs. Desmond, invited her to rest in her bower; and, while sitting there, she detailed all her plans, and complained that Mr. O'Reilly's scrupulous honesty had prevented her having the prettiest hedges in the world round the larger beds. "But you will have learned from that little disappointment," said her father, "that there are proper times and seasons for doing everything; and the power of controlling your wishes will be of more use to you than forty hedges; and as to your pyrus and thermopsis, and all the other objects of your ambition, you may plant them at your leisure when you may be sure of their thriving."

"But when are we to go to the bees?" exclaimed Gerald.

"As soon as my mother is rested, and when I have gathered some flowers for her," said Evelyn. She then opened a little wicket-gate, which Mabel and her brother had not perceived, and took them into a long sheltered walk, where several plants, still in beautiful blossom, amply compensated for the deficiencies of the flower-garden. They soon returned with a rich bouquet for Mrs. Desmond, who proposed that they should then go to the bees to satisfy Gerald, and afterwards, as she still felt a little tired, return to the house. But Mr. Desmond interposed, and, advising the young people to go to the bees or wherever they liked, recommended Mrs. Desmond's immediate return to the house, and offered an arm to each of his companions. The children and their sister, pleased at the interruption of a formal walk, hurried away; and Mr. Desmond, glad to have an opportunity of talking to Mrs. Manvers about Evelyn, said, "You and she seem to have quite laid aside the painfully cold reserve that I perceived when I was here last; but have you acquired any influence over her?"

"I cannot boast of much," replied Mrs. Manvers. "Now and then she has, I acknowledge, yielded to my arguments against some fancy, but in general she adheres most steadily to her first determination. When the time is past, and she sees her mistake, she is then always ready to confess it candidly."

"I am afraid my poor child is more wilful and obstinate than I had imagined. Perhaps she ought to be placed more decidedly under your control."

"No, I think not. She says herself that she shall learn best by experience; and I believe she is right. When she finds what difficulties her inconsiderate generosity and her willingness to promise assistance to the poor around her have caused, she will learn to guide herself with more prudence."

"Yes; I hope we have not allowed her to go too far, however," said Mr. Desmond, thoughtfully; "it may be more difficult to vanquish an acquired habit than to have prevented it."

"I understood it to be your wish," said Mrs. Manvers, "that I should not directly interfere with her management,


unless on very urgent occasions ; and this I did in one or two instances in regard to expenditure ; but had I attempted more I should have teased her into a discontented temper, without having convinced her reason. I was unhappy, however, at the difficulties which I feared she might fall into, and was going to write to you when, fortunately, your present visit saved me from that necessity. She dislikes control, but she would have been indignant if she thought I acted as a spy ; therefore I will not enter into any particulars of her conduct. Now that you are here, she will, I am sure, detail to you whatever she has done. She is perfectly open and true, and those invaluable qualities will greatly facilitate your efforts to regulate her conduct."

"You are very right. Pray do not imagine that I was discontented with you ; on the contrary, I feel that it was a most happy circumstance for her and me that you were so kind as to consent to take such an anxious charge upon you."

"I think," said Mrs. Desmond, "that she is already much improved in many small things ; her manners very much indeed. How did she appear at Ardscar Hall?"

"Just what you would have liked—modest but not abashed—at ease but not forward—and as ready to join in conversation with the old as to be amused with the young people. Altogether she enjoyed the visit, and seemed surprised at finding such polished society in this wild country."

"The dear child," said Mr. Desmond, laughing heartily, "is very amusing between her enthusiastic fondness for Ireland and the silly prejudices that she imbibed from the people among whom she chiefly lived—wholly ignorant as they are of Ireland and its inhabitants."



CHAPTER XXXVII.

Traces everywhere of a Deluge — Caves and Hills — Held Sacred —
Double Peak of Mount Ararat — Arkite and Fire Worship.

SEIZING a convenient opportunity when there was no danger of interruption, Evelyn said to her father, "When you were conversing, papa, with Mr. T—— and Mr. White about antiquities, I think I heard you say that traces of the deluge, besides those impressed on the surface of the earth, may be found in every country. Will you be so good as to explain what you meant, if it will not be too troublesome?"

"Why should you think it troublesome? To gratify your inquiring mind is one of the greatest pleasures that I can enjoy."

"Thank you, dear papa. I was afraid also that you would consider it to be too learned a subject for me."

"Oh no! I think knowledge of that kind should be much more generally cultivated than it is. I was saying that in every region of the world that has been visited, travellers have found that a universal deluge may be distinctly traced, not alone in its effects on the physical state of the globe, but also in the traditions which that stupendous event seems to have everywhere left among the inhabitants, and which are apparent in many of their customs and monuments. They appear to have been originally founded on the ceremonies instituted by Noah and his family in commemoration of their deliverance from the ark; and though afterwards mixed up with fabulous tales and degraded by superstitious and disgusting rites, they are still perceptible in every country."

"Is it not extraordinary that any customs should yet exist which began in such very remote times?"

"Not so surprising as you seem to think; for when you

consider the gratitude that their miraculous preservation must have produced in the survivors of that dreadful convulsion, and the indelible impression it must have made on their minds, you will not wonder that the simple worship by which they endeavoured to express those feelings should have been handed down from father to son for many generations, nor that some vestiges of that worship should be traced in those superstitions which still exist. It is a well-known fact that religious belief, though, like all earthly things, liable to corruption, is yet that which takes the deepest root in the heart of man."

"But how could idolatrous customs have first begun? Noah himself worshipped the true God; and surely, papa, it was unlikely that true religion could ever lead to idolatry."

"You can easily imagine, Evelyn, with what heartfelt gratitude Noah and his family found themselves once more on dry ground, and that the first impulse would be to return thanks solemnly for their deliverance. Accordingly, we find in the eighth chapter of Genesis that Noah 'built an altar unto the Lord.' As the ark had rested from the waters on 'the mountains of Ararat,' his altar was most probably erected near the scene of his release, the place where his hopes had revived, and where his trust in the Lord was proved. It was natural that he should select some appropriate spot there, and consecrate it to the name of the Lord."

"But, papa, do you think that was wrong or superstitious?"

"No, my dear, far from it. I have just said that it was most natural that the spot on which they were restored to the enjoyment of life and liberty, after twelve months of such awful imprisonment, should become hallowed, and should excite the most pious and grateful emotions in the hearts of those who had witnessed those fearful events, and on whose minds the remembrance of a catastrophe so tremendous, and a deliverance so wonderful, must have been deeply imprinted."

"Yes, papa, I perceive how deeply their descendants must have been interested in all the details of that time which they heard from those who had witnessed such events. Every memorial of the place must have been precious to them!"

"Yes, certainly; that lofty range of mountains, and every-

thing connected with their escape and previous imprisonment, was probably sanctified in their eyes—even the olive-branch has ever since been the symbol of peace and prosperity; and it has been supposed that from similar associations caverns became sacred, as representations of the interior of the ark. But though at first venerated merely as commemorative of the gloomy chambers of their floating house, yet afterwards, when the pure and simple patriarchal religion grew corrupt, they became the scene of idolatrous rites, and consequently caves may be found in all parts of the world, but more particularly in the East, which are to this day held sacred."

"But in many countries," Evelyn remarked, "it would have been difficult to find caverns suited to their purposes."

"And there," replied Mr. Desmond, "buildings were constructed as substitutes—small and rude at first, but afterwards expanding into the stately temple, the outer chamber of which, in the buildings of remote times, in some degree resembling a cavern, was by the Greeks called *naos*, from *naus*, a ship; and from thence, or rather from *navis*, the Latin for ship, has been derived the term nave, with which you are acquainted, as applied to one of the divisions of a church."

"Is it not that part of the church which lies between the western door and the entrance into the choir?"

"Yes, my dear."

"Well, papa, having so nicely traced the naves of our churches up to the interior of the ark, you must now tell me, when Noah's descendants spread over the earth, and could no longer visit Mount Ararat, how they kept up their veneration for those hills, which, as you said, had been so strongly interwoven with their gratitude."

"The connexion is so obvious, my dear daughter, between those feelings and the obstinacy with which the Israelites persisted in sacrificing in 'high places,' that it is scarcely necessary to point out to you that those high places were emblems of that sacred hill."

"But, papa, in some countries there are no hills. How, then, could they preserve their customs and their worship in high places?"

"We may readily suppose," said her father, "that those

who dwelt in plains formed artificial hills, on which they erected altars for the same commemorative worship; and that to the same source may be ascribed the great pyramidal mounds and buildings which still exist in various parts of the world. The remains of the Tower of Babel still show its original form; and stupendous works of that kind have recently been discovered in Mexico and Peru."

"But that idea must be chiefly conjecture. Can we now reasonably suppose that distant hill to have really been the origin of those curious remains?"

"I think we may, my dear; and indeed it is not so extraordinary, if you consider that such was the general veneration for Mount Ararat that there are few mountainous countries in the world which have not claimed the honour of its belonging to them. Double-peaked hills were sanctified, as more particularly resembling it; and in the course of time not hills only, but anything which could be imagined to bear even a remote resemblance to its double peak."

"Why do you lay such an emphasis on its double peak?" said Evelyn.

"Because," he replied, "as the ark was considered to have rested between the peaks of Mount Ararat, everything of that form—things which had not even the slightest resemblance to the mount or the ark—were held sacred, and hills and high places became the scenes of religious rites; so strong was the desire to commemorate the abating of the waters, when Noah, opening the ark, and seeing the dry ground, must have originally poured forth his gratitude for his release."

"You say other things were held sacred, papa, besides real hills with double peaks?"

"It would be endless to detail the various things which were sanctified as emblems of the ark when resting between the peaks of Ararat: small islets, even rocks with a double crest; the misseltoe, the leaves of which, being in pairs, appear when expanded somewhat in form of a crescent, with the fruit resting in it, was looked upon as a holy symbol; the head of a bull, with an egg placed between the horns, was another. And besides innumerable types of that sort, when in after ages the worship of the sun and moon became intermixed

with the religion handed down by the patriarchs, we find that the crescent of the moon was held in veneration, the horns of which, when represented with a globe or a boat in the centre, was considered as a type of the mountain of Ararat."

"In short, many things which had but little real resemblance to it were imagined to have some?"

"Yes, an extraordinary degree of sanctity was given even to things of very inferior nature, if a shadow of resemblance to that early object of devotion was perceptible. Among others, I must tell you that there was a scarabæus, or sacred beetle, which was held in much veneration."

"A beetle held in veneration, papa! I suppose it must have been a very large and handsome creature. Do pray describe it."

"I will describe it to you some other opportunity, but now we have not time."

"This ancient worship seems to be quite different from the fire-worship that you once mentioned. What, then, do you call it, papa?"

"It has been named by some Arkite worship, as derived from the ark; and however it may afterwards have degenerated, there was at first no intentional idolatry—only the expression of gratitude for escape from the deluge, and for restored freedom. Fire-worship was invented much later, and was essentially idolatrous—it arose from a fanciful idea that great men were placed after death in the heavenly bodies, which thus shared in the worship that was paid to them. The sun, or Baal, was thought to reign supreme over all, and was at first only honoured as being the source of light and heat, but it was afterwards worshipped; and then fire, as being its emblem, was likewise worshipped. In some countries, however, the sacred flame, preserved in honour of the sun, was only hallowed, not adored."

"Was not the moon adored also?"

"Yes, the moon was adored as Queen of Heaven, and in honour of it there were many rites and ceremonies; and so general were the superstitions connected therewith, that in the third century of the Christian era, when serious errors crept into the Christian church, many of those ceremonies were

transferred to the Holy Virgin, and the offerings of spotted calves and other things formerly sacred to that luminary were then devoted to her. It is curious to observe the variety of meaning given to every part of those ancient systems, and the confused enchainment of allusions and sacred objects."

"How very interesting it would be to trace all these ancient superstitions and ceremonies to their origin! But where, papa, can I learn all the particulars relative to them."

"Yes, they are interesting," said Mr. Desmond, "but very fanciful; and any superficial inquiry into them, instead of making you better acquainted with history, would only tend to mystify your mind. In all your studies of ancient history your principal object should be to work out the connexion of events—the progress of civilization—the causes that led to the rise and fall of nations—and the opposite effects of superstition or of pure religion on mankind. History then becomes a rational study: it enables us to comprehend those early times, and it unravels the truth from the fables and mysteries in which it is apparently involved."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Cairns — Pillar Stones — Cromleachs — Meaning of Cromdarragh —
Hollow under the Great Stone — The Willow — Old Times — The
Little Cupbearer.

ON the summit of one of the hills near Cromdarragh Castle there was a remarkable lump or knoll which had long excited Evelyn's curiosity, and which she learned, upon inquiring, was called a cairn. In her drives about the neighbourhood she had observed others in different places; and as the country people always spoke of them with an appearance of veneration, she applied to her father for information respecting their use and origin.

"They are mere heaps of stones," said Mr. Desmond, "and are supposed to be memorials of remarkable events, or, perhaps, rude monuments to some great men."

"What is the meaning, papa, of the word cairn?"

"The word is supposed by some to be derived from the Arabic word *Keren*; and the meaning seems to be a structure of some kind raised on the summit of a hill or mountain-top. They were certainly called cairns by the ancient Britons; and have preserved that name here as well as in Great Britain."

"Then, are they merely loose heaps, and not of any regular form, but just as it happened that the stones were thrown together?"

"They are more or less pyramidal in their form, because that is the shape that they naturally assume, and were possibly in very early times meant to imitate Mount Ararat."

"Are they found in other countries, papa?"

"Yes; but I think rough heaps of stones are not so common as earthen mounds, which are abundant not only in Europe

but throughout the East, and even in America ; in Ireland they are very numerous."

"I believe," said Mrs. Manvers, "that those mounds or tumuli are supposed to have been places of interment."

"Yes," said Mr. Desmond, "there is reason to believe that most of those erected in later ages have been placed over the remains of warriors and chieftains ; but there is no doubt that their origin may be traced up to the most remote times, and that they were consecrated to some religious purpose ; so that the greater part of those now extant may have been applied to the use you mention, though established at first for other objects. Besides the cairn, which is simply, as I said, a heap of stones in somewhat of a pyramidal form, there are various other stone memorials of past events, such as pillar-stones, and also cromleachs of different forms."

"How wonderful, now that their origin and their use are alike forgotten, that such a variety of them should still be preserved ! But how very delightful it would be, papa, if there had been some record or inscription on each of those curious memorials, giving a little history of the objects for which they had been erected ! I do not know what you mean by cromleach, though I have heard the word sometimes used by different people. I wish I could see one of those places."

"There is a remarkable one within a few miles of this place," replied Mr. Desmond, "which you ought to see, for your castle takes its name from it. Why not drive there in the pony-carriage this morning ?"

"Oh ! by all means—how pleasant !" exclaimed both Evelyn and her sister. The morning was charming, and Evelyn instantly rang the bell to order the carriage ; but suddenly recollecting herself, she said to Mrs. Desmond, blushing as she spoke, "I beg your pardon ; in my heedlessness I forgot to consult you, or inquire if you would like to drive this morning to the cromleach !"

"Yes, I see you forgot me," said Mrs. Desmond smiling ; "but do not think of it, my dear : I know, and can allow for, youthful ardour in following up any object ; so pray think no more about the omission. I should like to be of the cromleach

party, but, though afraid to venture, I beg that every one else may go. No, no, Mrs. Manvers! I see in your countenance that you are going to propose staying with me, but I will not agree to it. Let me be queen of the castle to-day: and pray, Evelyn, stay as long as you like; do not think about my being alone."

In compliance with Mrs. Desmond's wish they all prepared to go, and in half an hour the happy party set out, resolved to make a long day and enjoy it to the utmost.

After winding their way through narrow roads and rough car-ways for some time, and patiently enduring jolts and jogs enough to shatter the wheels and break the springs, they found at last that it was impossible to go farther in the carriage."

"So much the better," exclaimed Evelyn, "I long to scramble about these wild places;" and, jumping out of the low carriage, was running on, heedless of every one else, till her father's voice recalled her. Reminding her that it was an exploring walk, and that they knew little of the paths among those hills, or of the inhabitants, he entreated her and his little party not to separate.

The variety of tracks, winding among a range of wild hills and valleys, was somewhat confusing; and tantalising too, as all looked so inviting that they wished to follow each of them. By degrees they perceived that they had gained a considerable height above the spot where they had left the carriage; and at last, on turning suddenly round a huge craggy knoll, they saw, to their great delight, the object of their toil directly before them, on a green hill that terminated a lovely little valley which they were then entering. When near the cromleach, the party stood for some moments admiring its bold and striking position, and astonished at the prodigious size of the stones of which it was formed. It was a surprising proof of the laborious perseverance of the ancient inhabitants of this country—unassisted as they were by the mechanic powers of modern days—and wonderful, as a memorial, still perfect, of ceremonies now forgotten.

"Are all cromleachs of the same size, and placed in similar situations?" Evelyn asked.

"No," replied her father, "they vary in every way, both as to the magnitude and the number of the stones, and are found in a variety of places—in valleys, on the side of hills, on the lofty summit of the mountain, and on the top of artificial mounts. This one is remarkable in several respects as well as in its great size; for in most instances, though varying in form and bulk, they consist of three supporters, on which one large stone, called the altar-stone, is balanced; whereas you see that here five are still standing, on which that great flat stone rests; and here, lying in the grass, are two other great stones, which appear to be exactly of the same kind, and evidently to have once formed a part of the whole."

"What is the meaning, papa, of the word cromleach? and what was the purpose for which these curious piles of stones were formed?"

"Probably as an altar where sacrifices were made to some idol," replied Mr. Desmond. "That they were used also sometimes as places of sepulture is certain, for there are many instances of skeletons having been found beneath them, both of men and of horses. That the last syllable meant stone there can be no doubt; and very little, I think, that *crom* signifies a deity. But other explanations have also been given of that term, though all are more or less connected with the same idea; for instance, some etymologists assert that *crom* means blood; while others say that it signifies bent, or inclined, and that it is applied to the cromleach because the large flat stone which rests on the others is invariably placed in a sloping position, so as to allow the blood of the victims offered to the idol to run off."

"But, papa, you told me that Cromdarragh Castle is named from this place; I hope it was not polluted by one of those sanguinary altars?"

"It was possibly an appendage to this cromleach. Darragh is the old Irish name for oak, and tradition tells us that formerly a great oak wood extended from these hills to the castle. Indeed you may observe in that direction some scattered time-worn oak-trees; and I have been assured by the farmer who lives at the foot of this hill, that he frequently finds young oak-shoots springing up as in a copse: and as

another proof of a wide-spread forest of oak having been here in former times, I may tell you that I have myself seen their stems and stumps dug out of yonder boggy piece of ground. You must therefore, I fear, reconcile yourself to the idea that your haughty castle and most of its domain were once sacred to the idol to whom this cromleach was dedicated."

"Well, if the origin of its name is not very pleasing, there is some satisfaction at least in learning its antiquity," replied Evelyn.

Mrs. Manvers inquired which, the cromleach or the circle of stones, was the most ancient.

"I consider the rath, the cromleach, the pillar-stone, and circle of stones, as all nearly coëval," said Mr. Desmond. "I think it appears probable that, originally, the cromleach was an imitation of the sort of altar which Moses commanded the Israelites to build to the Lord; for you know they were forbidden to employ any tool in preparing the stones, and therefore we may suppose that they would erect something of this nature."

"It is remarkable that these stones, so loosely laid on each other, should have stood for ages, and, indeed, still seem so firmly fixed!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"Yes," said Mrs. Manvers; "we might almost suppose that they were permitted to remain unmoved in order to exemplify to us some expressions in the sacred writings which might otherwise be obscure."

"And this very cromleach," said Mr. Desmond, "is an instance in point of Mrs. Manvers' idea.

"How so, papa?"

He replied, "The altar is, you see, formed of seven huge stones, each of them being placed at a certain angle, and all appear to have mutually supported the one great stone laid upon them. In some cromleachs there are only three supporting stones, four in others, six in some, and rarely five—though five seem to answer the purpose here at present. But whatever the number is, though the large stone or table rests upon them all, apparently there is always one which more particularly supports its weight; so that if that stone be taken away the altar-stone itself falls; and therefore——"

"Well, but," said Evelyn, interrupting her father, "I do not see how that is connected with what Mrs. Manvers said."

"I was on the point of explaining it, my dear, when you interrupted me." Evelyn was ashamed of her impatient interruption and apologised, and he continued.

"It has been ingeniously thought by some learned men, that when our Saviour was compared, as in the ancient book of Job, in the Psalms, and afterwards by St. Paul, to the corner stone, it was to the supporting stone of this species of altar that the allusion was made. It seems to render the sense more forcible—for the corner stone of any ordinary building might be removed without endangering the structure; but in withdrawing this principal stone, the whole would fall; and if, as I suggested, the sacred altar of unhewn stone which Moses commanded to be built was of like nature to this, the point of the expression is thus explained and strengthened by the reference to those sacred places which were associated in their minds with the worship instituted by their forefathers."

"That is a peculiar and striking view of the subject," said Mrs. Manvers; "and connects former ages with the more recent time of our Lord; it is quite new to me, and I think it an additional proof that in studying the Scriptures we may often derive advantage from a careful examination of pagan customs and mythology."

"Assuredly," said Mr. Desmond, "they may throw great light on many obscure passages. Well, Mabel, you look anxious to say something: what is it, my child?"

Mabel, who had been waiting for a pause in the conversation, now pointed to a hollow immediately under the great stone, saying, "I was going to ask you what was the use of that, papa?"

"A similar hollow," replied her father, "may be frequently observed under other cromleachs between the upright stones. It is thought to have been for the purpose of facilitating the passage of cattle and children under the sacred fire,—a practice which we find mentioned in Scripture, and the Israelites reproached for passing their children under the fire of Moloch. Moloch, perhaps you do not know, was another name for the sun."

"I have heard," said Mrs. Manvers, "that many of the names of sacred spots in Ireland are supposed to allude to the sun."

"I believe there is good reason to think so," replied Mr. Desmond, "though some antiquaries doubt the fact. I could give you a long list of places, the Irish names of which are distinctly applicable; but it requires an intimate acquaintance with the Irish language to understand these allusions. In the county of Kilkenny, Mrs. Manvers, you may recollect a cairn of great size, which stands on the hill of Slieb-grian, which means the hill of the sun. I think, however, we might pursue that part of the subject more conveniently with a map before us and the Irish dictionary on the table; and, indeed, we had better think now of returning."

But Gerald stopped his father, who was going to walk away, by exclaiming loudly, "Would not this be a good time for our sandwiches?"

His suggestion was willingly adopted by the rest of the party, who were all as sensible as Gerald to the effect of the fresh air of the hills on their appetites. They selected a pretty spot at the foot of the cromleach hill, and seated themselves under a picturesque old willow, of that kind called the timber saw, near which there was a well surrounded by stones to protect it from the cattle. These stones were tufted with mosses and ferns; wild flowers peeped from under them; the clear bright well reflected the drooping willow-branches and the hill; and altogether it was a most inviting little spot.

While engaged in their repast, Mrs. Manvers, looking at the ancient tree, the pendent branches of which were gracefully and comfortably shading her from the sun, gently repeated the following song:—

"Old times, old times, the gay old times
When I was young and free,
And heard the merry Easter chimes
Under the willow-tree;
My Sunday palm beside me laid,
My cross upon my hand,
A heart at rest within my breast,
And sunshine on the land.

Old times! old times!

"It is not that my fortunes flee,
Nor that my cheek is pale—
I mourn whene'er I think of thee,
My darling native vale!
A wiser head I have I know
Than when I listen'd there,
But in my wisdom there is woe,
And in my knowledge—care.
Old times! &c.

"And sure the land is nothing changed,
The birds are singing still,
The flow'rs are springing where we ranged,
There's sunshine on the hill!
The holly waving o'er my head
Still sweetly shades my frame,
But ah! those happy days are fled,
And I am not the same!
Old times! &c.

"Oh! come again ye merry times,
Sweet, sunny, fresh, and calm;
Oh! let me hear those Sunday chimes,
And wear my Sunday palm.
If I could cry away mine eyes,
My tears would flow in vain;
If I could waste my heart in sighs,
They'll never come again.
Old times! old times."

Mrs. Manvers' voice faltered at one or two of the lines, but Mr. Desmond felt them still more deeply; rising hastily, the tears in his eyes, he said, "I well know that very touching song: it is supposed to have been written by a young woman in a very humble sphere of life, but to the proudest of us it must be applicable on many occasions. So come along, my friends, let us return to our own daily vocations. This is an interesting spot, but we have lingered here long enough."

Just then Evelyn observed a little girl who was carelessly running along the edge of the steep and rugged hill, which appeared almost to hang over, the well. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "look at that little girl!—she will break her neck! Papa, do call to her—tell her to stop! Oh little girl! don't come on!"

"Hush, my love! your calling to her may startle the poor

child, and cause the very danger you apprehend. It might be hazardous to you, who seldom ramble among such wild paths; but that little girl is accustomed to wander over these hills and rocks: even Mabel could walk safely along that pathway."

"Let us observe what she is going to do," said Mrs. Manvers. "I think she is coming down to us."

The little girl rapidly descended, jumping from stone to stone, or swinging herself from one bush to another of the stunted hazel which grew in patches on the side of the hill. When near the party she stopped timidly, as if fearful of approaching. They beckoned and called to her; yet she still seemed to hesitate, till Mr. Desmond spoke to her in Irish, desiring her to come on, and she then instantly bounded down to them over bushes and rocks.

Curtysing to each of the ladies, and pointing to the well, she asked Mr. Desmond if they would like to have some water to drink; and bending over the stones to fill a little tin cup that she held in her hand, she presented it to Mrs. Manvers first, and then to each of the party. They thanked her, and asked what her name was, and where she lived; but she only smiled and curtsied, showing that she did not understand them. Evelyn gave her the remains of the sandwiches, and, to the child's great surprise, put a shilling into her hand. She expressed her gratitude in her own language, and then, looking wistfully at Mr. Desmond, said, with the drawl peculiar to that part of the country, "A booke—a booke."

"What can she want with a book?" exclaimed Evelyn. "She does not understand English!"

"She has learned to read Irish, perhaps," said Mabel; "will you ask her, papa?"

The child looked from one to the other, wishing to know what they were saying about her, and doubting whether to go or stay; but a few Irish words from Mr. Desmond reassured her. He inquired what she was doing among the hills, and how she occupied herself, and what he could do for her: to which she answered, that she was looking after the cattle that were sent up to the hills for summer pasture, and employed herself at times in knitting; that she took a cake of oaten

bread and a little milk with her from home every morning ; and that she wished for nothing but a book.

"Can you read, my little girl?"

"I am learning, Sir. The man who taught us to say some of the *good booke*, now and then teaches me to read ; and if I had a book of my own, I could sometimes read a word or two here."

"But how did he teach you what was in the good book?"

"Oh then, Sir ! did'nt he read part of it over and over to us—and wouldn't I remember it after hearing it two or three times?"

Mr. Desmond desired her to say what she had last learned, and she correctly repeated the latter part of the 18th chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew from the Irish Bible, seeming to understand and take pleasure in it. As soon as she had finished, Mr. Desmond, who had listened to her with deep interest, told her he would send her a book, and, having again asked her where she lived, the little girl pointed to a distant hovel in the valley, one of the poorest in appearance of a miserable collection of cabins, and, telling her he would see her again in a short time, he bade her good morning.

She curtsied, and scampered up the hill by one of the little goat-paths as quickly as a kid.

Mr. Desmond remarked that she was a clever child, and deserved encouragement ; and Mrs. Manvers added, that probably a little help from time to time would not be thrown away. Evelyn said that she liked her countenance, though she was not at all pretty ; and expressed a wish to walk then to the cabin to which the little girl had pointed, if Mrs. Manvers had no objection. Mrs. Manvers liked the proposal ; but Mr. Desmond thought it better to postpone the visit till he could take with him the promised book.

Walking briskly down the hills and sloping valleys which had been so slowly ascended, they soon reached the carriage, and drove home delighted with the whole expedition, and loaded with bunches of wild flowers and ferns, which were all eagerly displayed to Mrs. Desmond, who listened with lively interest to their account of the mysterious cromleach, of the wild beauty of the scene, and of their adventure with the simple-minded little cupbearer.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Sacred Scarabæus — The Ball it carries — Manner in which it pushes the Ball — Veneration with which it is regarded.

"I HOPE, papa, that you do not forget that you promised to tell me some particulars of that sacred scarabæus which you mentioned when we were speaking of Mount Ararat, some days ago?"

"No, indeed, my dear Evelyn, I do not forget my promise; one so desirous of knowledge as you are deserves to have her inquiries encouraged and satisfied. The beetle, or scarabæus, to which I alluded, appears to have been held sacred in the most remote times in Egypt and in Etruria, and was figured in every shape and attitude on stones of various kinds: it is found among the hieroglyphics on the breasts of mummies, where it seemed to serve as an amulet, and was used both as a ring and a signet."

"Is that a late discovery, papa?"

"No, it has long been known to every one who has paid attention to the antiquities of Egypt: These memorials of some obsolete superstition were also common in ancient Etruria, where many have been found with Etruscan inscriptions on them which have not yet been deciphered: and some of them are the more curious from having Egyptian figures on them."

"I wonder why that creature in particular should have been selected for a sacred memorial or symbol," said Evelyn.

"It has been imagined, from the very few facts on which any probable opinions can be formed, that the scarabæus was held sacred because it generally carries a ball of clay within its horns, and that the ball was intended to represent or to be a symbol of the ark resting between the peaks of Mount Ararat."

"But do those beetles really carry balls in that manner—of what are the balls composed?"

"There is no doubt," replied her father, "that such is the well-known habit of that little creature; but the real nature of the ball does not appear to have been quite understood until a very intelligent and observant traveller in Egypt (Mr. Wilde) within these few years published some interesting remarks on that subject. He tells us that the *Scarabæus sacer*, or sacred beetle, is still very common in Egypt. He saw them running about in all directions in the warm sunshine, and busily engaged in rolling their balls over the sands with the greatest industry, and in a very curious manner. They are evidently possessed of great strength and perseverance; and having formed the balls out of clay and camel's dung, which they mix up into a kind of mortar something like that which swallows make in constructing their nests, they deposit their eggs in them. Thus these balls become a crust or shell to preserve the eggs, and the old beetles roll them about over the sands till they are sufficiently dry to be laid up in proper places, in order to await the period of their development."

"How very curious! Who ever before heard of a moving nest? I suppose it was this singular energy and sagacity that first attracted the attention of the ancients," said Evelyn.

"Very likely," replied Mr. Desmond; "but you should recollect that the ball or globe was one of their favourite emblems of creative power. The manner in which these industrious insects wheel about their balls is worth mentioning: they are provided with two projections on the head like horns, which are used by one beetle as a lever to raise and push the ball forward, while its companion, placing itself before the ball, and moving backwards, assists the operation by drawing the face of the ball down with its fore feet. They keep it thus, Mr. Wilde says, constantly turning and moving: sometimes three or four of these little creatures may be seen clustered about one ball, in order to unite their strength when any impediment interrupts their progress. However, they do not always follow the same method; probably a change of posture rests them, and therefore they may sometimes be seen

pushing backwards with their hind legs, and at others assuming the most grotesque attitudes,—even standing on their heads.”

“ But where do they push the balls to at last ? ” said Evelyn. “ But of course they are in search of convenient holes ; for I have read that all insects of the beetle kind place their eggs in some kind of hole.”

“ Mr. Wilde tells us,” said her father, “ that they continue the whole day rolling them about in the heat of the sun, and do not place them at once in holes like other coleopterous insects as you mentioned. He observed, that, if the day became suddenly clouded, off they went, abruptly forsaking the object about which they had been so busy, till renewed sunshine encouraged them to return to their work ; and if the sun did not re-appear they deferred it till the following morning, when with fresh vigour they completed their task. He seems to think that the object of all this rolling was to expose the balls equally on all sides to the rays of the sun, so as to secure a general and equal heat to the eggs.”

“ And did the sanctity of these beetles arise,” said Mrs. Manvers, “ from the marvellous efforts they made to mature their eggs, and to support the balls of clay which contained them between their horns ? ”

“ It is not unlikely that those circumstances may have first led to their being regarded with respect and veneration, and then, with the mystical ingenuity which the ancients employed in combining the traditions of truth with the perverseness of idolatry, they fancifully connected the reproductive globe of eggs, seated between the horns of the scarabæus, with the appearance of the ark resting between the peaks of Mount Ararat. There is another circumstance that peculiarly tended to associate this beetle with divine power and goodness in the minds of the Egyptians—it is the first insect which appears on the ground after the subsidence of that vivifying and reproductive inundation of the river Nile to which they owe their subsistence, and seemed in itself sufficient to render it an emblem of the preservation of the ark. Whatever may have been the origin of the veneration bestowed on this insect, it seems to have arisen in very remote times : but I advise you

to read Mr. Wilde's book, which is extremely entertaining. You will also find much information with regard to this curious subject in a very interesting work which I have lately read—and I refer you to it, as one from which you might derive much pleasure—'The Visit to the Tombs of Etruria,' by Mrs. Hamilton Grey."

CHAPTER XL.

Rational Amusements — Historical Questions — Method of Teaching History.

ALTHOUGH Evelyn had, at their first meeting, considered Mabel as a mere child, she had very soon become convinced that her sister was not only qualified to be her companion, but actually superior to her in several acquirements. Emulous of her knowledge, and generously admiring her superiority, she loved her more every day, and enjoyed her company with that ardour which characterized all her feelings. She delighted, too, in the gaiety and animation of Gerald, which enlivened the stillness and gloomy grandeur of the old castle. All Evelyn's occupations were pursued with double zest in company with her sister: every day they read together, and talked over what they had read; or frequently, when the young people went out to walk, they amused themselves by repeating to each other the substance of the books they had been reading separately; and their walks often finished by a visit to some of the poor cottagers near them.

They sketched the same trees and the same views, and finished them together, with that just degree of emulation which leads to excellence without exciting rivalry, and which strengthens friendship by the interest that each takes in the other's success.

Music, too, was an ample source of mutual pleasure. Mabel loved to listen to Evelyn's clear, full-toned voice, and she sometimes took the second in those duets which required little power, as her voice was not yet sufficiently formed to allow of any great efforts. It was pleasant to hear the sisters sing together without accompaniment, but still more delightful to witness the real harmony that existed between them. Evelyn, who had had the advantage of an excellent master, willingly

imparted to Mabel the instruction she had received; and she did so without affectation, or that assumption of superiority which young ladies who have had the "best masters" sometimes arrogate to themselves.

When walking together in the shrubbery, or in the long walk arched over by ancient lime-trees, they were frequently heard carolling together. Gerald sometimes complained that they sang too much; at other times, he said, they were too wise and rather dull; he joined, however, in their amusements with great interest, taking his part in some of them with animation and ingenuity.

Capping verses, an old and favourite occupation of his and Mabel's, was revived with renewed pleasure now that Evelyn joined in it; however, as that required memory only, it soon gave way to another diversion, that of introducing a certain set of uncommon words, given for the purpose, into some verses to be made impromptu, or perhaps as the first word of each line.

Mr. Desmond was sometimes surprised at the quickness of mind and the talent that Gerald displayed in this and also in another play of the same nature, where twelve words being selected as rhymes, the lines are to be filled up, so as to make, if not quite sense, at least very plausible nonsense.

But these amusements were not confined merely to him and his sisters—their father and mother and Mrs. Mauvers joined in them; and while their assistance rendered the plays more rational perhaps, they certainly never made them dull by misplaced gravity. Perhaps Evelyn might soon have been tired of these amusements, had she considered them as only children's play, for that little seed of pride which had early taken root in her heart was not eradicated, though its growth had been somewhat checked by the influence that her father had acquired over her mind, and, indeed, by her own good sense. But humility springs feebly in the heart, and its increase is slow, till experience has convinced us of our natural imperfections, and till religious principle gives vigour to our efforts to conquer them.

Historical questions produced much agreeable conversation and research. To think of a remarkable event or character,

and puzzle the inquirers by ingenious answers, exercised the skill of both the questioned and the questioner, and required a ready knowledge on historical subjects. But this amusement was rather above Gerald. He knew enough, however, to enable him sometimes to discover the required answer, and a little success, exciting a desire for more, produced a lively interest in the study, and made him feel pleasure in this exertion of both understanding and memory. His father's method of teaching history had succeeded perfectly well with Mabel, and Mr. Desmond now hoped that Gerald's progress would be an additional proof of its advantages.

He began with the earliest records, the Scriptures; and, carrying on the connexion, as far as it has been ascertained, between the corresponding events of sacred and profane history, he led his pupils gradually to the succeeding eras. In each day's reading he made them note the principal events of the same dates in the several countries of which any records are still extant; and for this purpose Gerald neatly ruled a large sheet of paper, divided into a series of columns, or chronological tables, for himself, which should exhibit at one view the nations, the leading facts with their dates, and the points of similarity or connexion.

By these means a clear knowledge is acquired of the most prominent circumstances of history, provided the pupil forms these comparative tables for himself; and by commencing with ancient history, the memory is relieved from a kind of inverted chronology, while the mind is free from all that confusion of remote and modern events which is frequently caused in the minds of children by the neglect of distinct classification of the principal periods of ancient history, such as the uncertain times, the heroic times, and the historic times; the latter comprehending those series of events in Grecian and Roman history which are supposed to be known by every well-educated person, and which are read with interest by old and young.

CHAPTER XLI.

Prophetic Passages in the Psalms — Analysis of Psalm ii. — Firstborn of the Dead — The Prophet's Exhortation to the Powerful and the Learned.

"IN my search for prophetic texts I am sure I shall find many among the Psalms," said Evelyn to her father.

"Certainly," he replied. "Indeed many pious commentators have thought that the whole book relates to Christ. There are numerous passages, however, of which He does indisputably form the grand subject; they contain express prophecies concerning his advent, humiliation, victories, and kingdom, exhibiting to us in the brightest descriptions the glory of that Redeemer to whom the psalmist endeavoured to direct the devotion of his readers."

"I have been reading the second Psalm, which appears so perfectly applicable to the Messiah; but I wish to ask you, papa, whether it was considered to have any secondary meaning."

"It appears from the Talmud and various Jewish authorities," replied Mr. Desmond, "that this prophecy was considered solely applicable to the expected Messiah, which was unquestionably the doctrine of the primitive Jewish church, and it was not till the year 1240 of our era that its literal application to David was supported by the Jews in their controversies with the Christians."

"It seems to me," said Evelyn, "that the character of the king alluded to there scarcely corresponds to that of any mere earthly sovereign."

"Besides which," said Mr. Desmond, "we find its application to Jesus Christ proved in Acts iv. by the testimony of the Apostles, who, after they had received the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, expounded the two first verses of that psalm, which they repeated, showing at every word the

correspondence of the prediction with Him. In the introduction to the Epistle to the Hebrews you may find too that this prophecy was appropriated to Christ by St. Paul."

"I see, papa, in the fourth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that the composition of the second Psalm is distinctly attributed to David, and yet he says in the sixth verse, 'My holy hill of Zion;' but, you know, the Temple was not at that time built."

"It may be said," her father replied, "that this expression only showed that he already knew that Mount Zion was the place chosen by the Lord, 'in order to put his name there,' and from whence it was named the Holy Hill; but even as the place where the temporary tent stood, in which the Ark was deposited by David himself, he would naturally so call it. Besides which, you find that it is in many places applied to the city of Jerusalem. As to the Psalm, we cannot doubt that it was his, as the Apostles distinctly say that it was."

"I wish, dear papa, you would be so good as to explain the rest of this Psalm, and show me the accomplishment of the next step of this prophecy."

"Most willingly. Well, then, the first part of this Psalm foretells the resistance which would be made to the Messiah and his spiritual kingdom—'The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.' You are sufficiently acquainted with the historical facts recorded in the New Testament to perceive this to have been literally the case; not only when our Lord and his Apostles first went forth to establish his authority, and that they were opposed by the chief priests and Pharisees and captains, who took counsel together to kill him, as well as by the combination of Herod with the Roman governor, but afterwards when the whole power of the Roman empire was exerted to extirpate Christianity. And then," continued Mr. Desmond, "the psalmist, as the natural consequence of these furious but impotent efforts, and in the strong figurative language of the Bible, proceeds, in the following verse, to foretell the divine contempt they will deserve, and the wrath with which they will be visited; the substance of which is that He that sitteth in the heavens shall have them in deri-

sion ; He will despise their wicked plans, and frustrate them when He sees fit."

" And then, papa, comes that verse about My holy hill of Zion, which I mentioned."

" Yes, the transition in this beautiful Psalm is immediate and striking, from the fruitless malice of the enemies of the Messiah, to the establishment of his kingdom : and in like manner did the fulfilment of the prophecy begin at the moment of the Resurrection. Then did the Gospel go forth throughout the world ; then was the real law, of which the Mosaic law was but the type, preached to all mankind ; and in the course of time, when the Lord sees fit, shall all on earth acknowledge that law and yield to his sceptre. Or, as St. Paul expresses it, all things shall be put under his feet, and He will be ' the head over all things to the church.' "

" How much it adds," said Evelyn, " to the beauty of those prophecies to have the references to them in the other parts of the Scriptures traced out so distinctly !"

Mr. Desmond resumed his explanation, saying, " For the word '*law*,' as it is translated in our Prayer-book (v. 7), we find in the Bible, '*decree*'—that mighty decree for the redemption of man, by which this all-important scheme of Providence had been ordained ; and, as a part of that decree, the Psalmist gives the express declaration of the divine origin of our blessed Redeemer—' Thou art my son.' No other words can give such a distinct and absolute declaration of Christ's peculiar divinity ; and St. Paul cites them as such in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The resurrection of our Lord was the day of his new birth ; and therefore St. Paul styles Him ' the firstborn from the dead ;' and he adds, ' Let all the angels worship him.' While on earth the Saviour does Himself declare that wonderful decree, and makes known the mystery of the Almighty will. He enjoined the disciples to preach that law in his name among all nations, and has given it in charge to his ministers to proclaim by that decree, or that law, remission of sins, and salvation to the ends of the earth."

" And yet, papa, many nations are still in ignorance of the Gospel ; as if Christians had disobeyed that command, and had neglected to impart those gracious promises."

" True : the Christian world must regret and ought to be ashamed that it is so. With our narrow views we cannot understand why those nations have been suffered to continue in ignorance so long. But though they may seem to us to have been for ages neglected or abandoned, we are assured in this very Psalm that it is the purpose of God to recover them through Christ to the knowledge, love, and service of Himself ; for He says, ' I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' The prophet, after repeating the threat of destruction to the impenitent sinner, then closes the prediction with an exhortation to the powerful and learned of this world to be instructed, and, humbly serving the Lord, to give their grateful love to Christ the Saviour."

" An exhortation which I trust I shall feel more and more inclined to obey," said Evelyn, " as I better understand the full meaning of the Scriptures."

" I pray that this good effect of your sacred reading may continue, my dear child ; and that, as you add to your knowledge, the true spirit and feeling of religion may enter into your heart and dwell therein," said Mr. Desmond, laying his hand upon her head and kissing her forehead.

CHAPTER XLII.

Pillar-Stones — Testimonial or Witness Stones—Mizpah—Gilgal—Circles of Stones in Great Britain and Ireland — Beth-el — Pillar-Stones in Brittany.

“ You said, papa, the day we went to see the great cromleach, that you would tell me something more about pillars and rocks ; perhaps you can spare time for it to-day. I am anxious to learn more about those remains of ancient times, which seem allowed to stand as if to induce people to study the early history of the world.”

“ Yes,” replied Mr. Desmond, “ they not only induce us to study history in order to obtain some light to enable us to comprehend those remains, but still more, they themselves act in return as proofs and interpreters of history.”

“ Perhaps, papa, those pillar-stones were intended to mark the places where some great events had taken place, the trophies of former victories?”

“ No, no,” he replied, “ they were undoubtedly connected with the religious worship of former ages ; they were records of a far deeper feeling than any deeds of military glory could excite, and are so frequently joined with the circle, the cairn, and the cromleach, that they well deserve our attention.”

“ To what then do they refer, papa ?”

“ There is much reason to think that they originally referred to the deliverance of Noah and his family from the Deluge,” replied Mr. Desmond. “ In the simplicity of those remote times, as I endeavoured to explain to you, large stones, at once permanent and conspicuous, were used, either single or in heaps or circles, as memorials of Mount Ararat and the Ark ; and in every part of the world traditions are, you know, still found which connect all those memorials either directly or indirectly with the Deluge. Though their original purpose, which was, as I said, commemorative, became obscured by

time, yet the sanctity attached to them was rather enhanced by antiquity, and the pillar-stone and unhewn rocks became at length objects of worship."

"The kind of sacred character which had thus been attached to those stones led, I suppose," said Mrs. Manvers, "to their being used as testimonials on all solemn occasions, such as the witness-stones that are frequently mentioned in the early books of the Bible as memorials of compacts."

"Before the corruptions to which I have alluded had taken place," Mr. Desmond said, "large stones were undoubtedly used by the Israelites to perpetuate the remembrance of any important transaction, but then they preserved the patriarchal character of being simply memorials."

Evelyn immediately recollected that Jacob set up a pillar-stone at Mizpah as a memorial of his covenant with Laban, and that, having made each of his brethren gather stones and make a heap of them there, he said "this heap be witness, and this pillar be witness," that neither of us shall pass them to the other for harm; and, she added, he afterwards placed a pillar of stone as a memorial on the grave of Rachel.

"But observe," said Mr. Desmond, "they were not for the purpose of worship, for when they afterwards became objects of idolatry they were strictly prohibited among the Israelites. It appears, by the early history of the Jews, that the use of commemorative stones had long been established; for instance, when Joshua made a covenant with the people in Shechem he took a great stone and set it up under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord, saying, 'Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us.'"

Evelyn again felt happy in being able to remind her father of the twelve stones taken up out of the river Jordan, when its waters were cut off before the ark of the Lord, so that the people passed over dry ground.

"Well remembered," said Mr. Desmond; "and the peculiarity and grandeur of the circumstance rendered it a very suitable occasion for combining the memory of that striking miracle with the greater deliverance of Noah and the remnant of all created things from the waters of the flood, by adopting the same method of commemoration which their forefathers

had used. Joshua desired that each tribe should set up a stone in the midst of the channel as a witness of the miracle; but, as that place would afterwards be inaccessible, he ordered the people to take twelve other stones out of the channel of the river, and set them in the place where they lodged that night, to be 'a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.'"

"Yes, papa," said Evelyn, "they pitched them in Gilgal; but in what manner, in what form? Do you think it was in that of a pyramid?"

"We are not told in the sacred history, my dear daughter; but there is some reason to suppose that they were arranged in a circle—of the same nature, probably, as the ancient circles of stone which are still to be traced, though many are imperfect, in Great Britain and other countries; for the word Gilgal signifies a sphere or circle. But whatever was the form, you see in Scripture that Gilgal continued in after times a place of sanctity and importance, for Samuel went there annually to administer justice, and it was the scene of some of the most important events in the history of Saul. At Gilgal it was that Saul was crowned King of Israel—that he was induced, by the impatience of his restless nature, disobediently to offer sacrifice before Samuel came to him—and that he received the communication from Samuel that his kingdom was rent from him for ever."

"It is remarkable," said Mrs. Manvers, "that in the three places—Beth-el, Gilgal, and Mizpah—where Samuel went yearly to judge Israel, stones of consecration are recorded to have been placed."

"Yes," replied Mr. Desmond; "and therefore we may safely infer that in his time those stones were only pious memorials, and had not yet been degraded by idolatry. But if we had any doubt on that point, we need only recollect that Moses himself, when he built an altar under Sinai, set up twelve pillars there;—we may therefore believe that stones, as memorials, whether single or placed in a circular form, were of ancient patriarchal institution, and were not disapproved of by the Lord until long afterwards, when they were perverted to idolatrous and impious ceremonies."

"Are any of those circles remaining in Ireland, papa?"

"Yes, my dear, they abound in Ireland, as well as in Scotland, and are found also in England and other countries. Stonehenge in Wiltshire, and one in Lewis (an island of the Western Hebrides), are of remarkable size—I might even say, of grandeur."

"I wish we could find one among the wild hills near this," said Evelyn.

"There are none immediately within your reach here," replied her father; "but it would not be difficult to contrive a visit to Lough Gur, in the county of Limerick, where there is one well worth examining."

"I wonder what sort of altar it was that Moses was directed to make of earth?" said Mrs. Manvers.

"When we read either of the great altar," Mr. Desmond replied, "which Moses made in obedience to the Divine mandate, 'an altar of earth thou shalt make unto me,' or of that which was subsequently built by the two tribes and a half on the east of Jordan, after the same pattern, we naturally figure to ourselves a gigantic mound of earth, just like one of those moats or barrows which are so numerous here."

"I suppose then," said Evelyn, after a few minutes' consideration, "that when Jacob took the stone which he had used as a pillow in his journey to Padan Aram, and set it up and anointed it with oil, it became one of those sacred pillars of which we have been speaking. But he called it Beth-el, which in the marginal explanation is 'the house of God.' I have always had a puzzle till now in my mind how one single stone could be called a house."

"It would certainly be difficult," replied Mr. Desmond, "to imagine it a house, though that is the literal meaning; but it was called so, figuratively, because God had appeared there twice. The pillar-stone had been for ages in use as a sacred memorial and witness of the power of the Almighty in withdrawing the waters from the face of the earth; and as it had been permitted as a symbol of gratitude and faith, the Lord sanctioned the simple memorial by the declaration 'I am the God of Beth-el where thou anointedst the pillar;' and the name 'House of God' was applied to it as a sacred place appointed for worship."

"Was it customary, papa, to pour oil on those sacred stones?"

"It appears, I think, to have been a usual part of the ceremony of consecration whether of stones or of kings. In after times, when the respect paid to those stones 'as sacred monuments or testimonials' became actual idolatry, when they were worshipped, prayed to, and praised, they were of course the more liberally besmeared with oil. But you will be surprised to hear that these absurd rites continued in some parts of Europe long after Christianity was established, and that, so late even as the year A.D. 567, the Council of Tours published an admonition on the subject. In some parts of Wales these rude stones were considered really to possess life in some degree, as the residence of deified heroes; and even to this day superstitious honours are paid to certain smooth round stones in the Highlands of Scotland."

"It is just the same in Brittany," said Mrs. Desmond, "where cromleachs and pillar-stones are found similar to those we see in these countries; and there is a great resemblance also in all their traditions and superstitions. In some parts of that province these pillars consist of a single stone of great size. One of them is 45 feet in height, but, from the accumulation of earth, much of it now stands below the surface; another is 28 feet high and 25 in circumference; and all of them are considered as emblems of divinity. They are sometimes accompanied by large table-stones, which are supposed to have been used as altars, and which are also of great size, for one of them measured 20 by 10 feet; in front of it there is an avenue formed of several upright stones, leading to what may have been, perhaps, a sort of sanctuary in front of the altar."

"It is awful," said Evelyn, "to think of the many silly, superstitious, and probably sanguinary rites that these circles and mounds must have witnessed during the many ages they have existed. I am determined to visit all the neighbouring cromleachs and cairns; but I shall look on them with a mixture of horror and veneration after all you have told me, papa."

"I wish," said Mrs. Manvers, "that some inquiring traveller would search for those stones which Joshua 'set up in Mount Ebal,' and on which he wrote a copy of the Law; but when

we observe the vast accumulation of earth and rubbish that collects over modern ruins, it would, I fear, be no very easy undertaking."

"But you forget, Mrs. Manvers, that those stones were covered with plaster," Mr. Desmond remarked, "which I fear would lessen the chance of your inquiring traveller's discovering a fragment of Joshua's writing."

"It would be an object worthy of the attempt, however," said Mrs. Desmond, "to discover the remains of a memorial so sacred and so ancient."



CHAPTER XLIII.

St. John's Eve in Brittany — Cattle and Children passed through the Fire — Circle of Stones in Upper Canada.

"How very distinctly those pillar-stones in Brittany, which you mentioned this morning," said Mrs. Manvers to Mrs. Desmond, "point to a common origin of the inhabitants of that country and of our own, or, at least, prove that some of our ancient customs sprung from the same source."

"They do; and it has been well remarked that there, as well as here, the remains of two or three different superstitions appear to have been engrafted one upon another; for instance, those pillars seem to refer to the original arkite memorials—and yet the Bretons have other customs which are undoubtedly derived from the ancient fire-worship."

"Where do you find any notice of them?" Mr. Desmond asked.

"In Mr. Trollope's account of a summer he passed in Brittany. I was much amused with his description of St. John's Eve, on which in almost every village and hamlet he saw a bonfire, of the same kind as those formerly so common here. At one place he followed a large crowd going in procession to the top of a hill, where, after some preparatory fireworks, a cannon announced that the great bonfire was going to be lighted; but not in the usual manner. It was to appear as if lighted by fire from heaven."

"How could they contrive that?" said Evelyn, looking up from her drawing.

"They fastened a long rope to the top of the tower of the church of St. John's," replied Mrs. Desmond. "The other end of it communicated with a prodigious heap of fuel, dry furze, and brushwood; and along this rope a flame, in the form of a dove, was so contrived that, apparently issuing from the

church, it was to run down along the rope and ignite the great heap of fuel. The idea was ingenious, and at the given signal down shot the fiery bird amidst the acclamations of the multitude; but, alas! in consequence of the rope not being sufficiently tight, it stopped about midway, and no effort could induce it to advance another inch. You may imagine the disappointment of both the contrivers and the spectators."

"Poor dove!" cried Mabel, "it was too modest I suppose to approach the crowd; but how vexatious for the people to lose their bonfire through its timidity."

"No, no, they did not lose it; they were content to light it in some more humble way; and our author says that the scene that followed was beyond the powers of either pen or pencil—the motley variety of age, dress, countenance, and gesture that was exhibited by the blaze, and still more, when its fury was a little abated, the singular dances that took place round it. He considered them to be much the same ceremonies as when fires were formerly lighted in honour of the sun at the time of the summer solstice, the dance being intended to represent the motion of the stars. After the dance cattle were brought up to the remains of the fire and made to leap over the burning embers, in order to preserve them from disease. Even children rushed in, just as in the ancient fires of Moloch, and snatched from the glowing mass a half-consumed brand to be carefully preserved for good luck till next St. John's eve, while shouts and cries rose on all sides from the surrounding crowds."

"That half-burned brand of wood snatched away is like the Yule-log at Christmas," exclaimed Mabel, "that we read of in the north of England."

"Yes, and just a remnant of the same superstition. One after another all the neighbouring hills were lighted up, and groups of young women, in their holiday dress, stole off to mount to the tops of the highest hills in hopes of seeing *nine* fires at once, being persuaded that those who were so fortunate would be married in the course of the year. The author says that, as he walked back to Morlaix, the whole country was illuminated with similar fires, and he describes the amusing appearance of the various shadowy circles of figures moving in the dance round the distant flames."

"Our bonfires in Ireland on St. John's Eve," said Mr. Desmond, "are too often characterised by the same foolish customs. Some years ago I happened to be so near one as to see distinctly that the people led their cattle through the fire, and literally passed their children through the flames, as in the worship of Moloch described in the Bible, to which Mabel refers. I actually saw children thrown across the flames into the arms of their mothers who stood opposite ready to receive them, while the young men vied with each other in leaping over the fire."

"What a horribly curious sight!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"In that entertaining book of Mr. Trollope's," said Mrs. Desmond, "I saw also a description of some curious rocking-stones in the same part of the country; one of them was twenty feet long. It lay not far from Perros, a little town on the coast, the whole of which is a mass of rocks, and chiefly of red granite like that of Egypt."

"But your rocking-stones, my dear wife, do not seem to be very well connected with your bonfires."

"No; but I remember that Mrs. Manvers was interested in the druidical remains of the Welsh, and there does appear to be a very close connexion between the pillar-stones of the two countries; as well as other points of relationship; for, besides the similarity of the name *menhir*, the numerous chronicles of King Arthur are fully as prevalent in Brittany as in Wales. The country is rich in romantic traditions about that favourite hero, for he is said to have ruled there for some time, and to have possessed the castle of Kerdurl. Indeed the peasants there firmly believe that even now Prince Arthur exists in fairy-land, and that he will at some future time return to rule his faithful Celts."

"If Prince Arthur's patrimony," said Mr. Desmond, "is to include all the countries where pillar-stones are found, he will have a very wide domain when he returns, not only in the East and in Europe, but he may even extend his claim to the 'far west;' for Kalm in his 'Travels in North America' describes great pillars which had been found on an extensive plain. They leaned against one another, each pillar consisting of a single stone, and in some places he observed that there were no other stones of any kind whatever

found. But I thought it very unsatisfactory that he gives us no traditions about them. In regard to the more remote state of that continent, he only says that it is evident, from the furrows which are still visible on the surface of the ground many hundred miles westward, and also from dressed flax being found buried at great depths, that the inhabitants ages ago were so far more civilised than those now to be found there, as that they must have had some knowledge of agriculture and the arts of industry."

"I saw lately," said Mrs. Manvers, "in a letter from my niece in Canada, a circumstance in regard to the by-gone American times, which, though perhaps scarcely worth mentioning, was interesting to me."

"Pray be so kind as to make it known; any communications relative to the former customs of America must be welcome," said Mr. Desmond.

"It is merely that in an excursion of some days' boating about the chain of Eastern lakes, north-east of Peterborough, in Canada, they saw a remarkable circle of large stones on an island. It seemed to be quite in the ancient fashion, with one large one in the midst; and it is supposed to have been a place where councils were formerly held. Very few traditions however of ancient times can be collected from the present race of native inhabitants of that country."

"Another instance you see of pillar-stones and circles being found in various countries wholly unconnected with each other," said Mrs. Desmond.

"Are pillar-stones and rocks really worshipped now in any of those countries?" Evelyn asked.

"Yes, my dear, I am sorry to say that, although we have had so much intercourse with the East, and, consequently, opportunity of giving religious instruction, idolatrous observances of every kind, even towards stones, are still but too frequent there. At last, however, we are really endeavouring, after being too long blind to our duty, to dispel the clouds of ignorance which have hitherto darkened the minds of millions of our fellow-creatures, and we may hope that the brightness of Christian truth will yet be established throughout all the regions of the earth."

CHAPTER XLIV.

Bills to be paid—Evelyn perplexed—And humbled—Reproof from Mr. Plunket — Walk to the Widow Green's — Conviction — Mabel's Sympathy—Ivory-Nut—Acorn.

ON the following Monday a crowd of bills came in to Evelyn : the amount of each of them was greater of course than she expected, and whether reasonable or not she had no idea. When all were added together—the thatcher's, the mason's, the plasterer's, the carpenter's, and the glazier's, along with the expense of the new sewer and paving the yard, together with the repairs of the widow Green's house—they amounted to a much larger sum than she had ever contemplated.

Besides these great demands there were others for sundry small repairs of the labourers' houses, and for whitewashing and improving the little hamlet on the side of the hill which her father had noticed the day of their walk.

The steward brought the bills to her, saying, " I suppose, Madam, you will pay these yourself, as I am not allowed money for extra expenses."

" I do not know. I did not calculate that they would have come to such a sum ; and now I—yes, yes, I will pay them ; but not till the next quarter—I—But have you examined the bills, Mr. Hickey ? are you sure they are all right ? "

" I do not know what agreement you made, my lady, with these people."

" I made none whatever."

" Oh ! Madam, that is not the way to deal with these people about here—they are very encroaching. I hope you will not be displeased with me for saying so ; but indeed, Madam, if you would permit me to make agreements for you with those you are going to employ, your work would be executed more cheaply, and, I think, fully as well."

At another time pride might have induced Evelyn to repel the steward's remonstrance ; but now she was too much humbled by the sense of her imprudence to resent it. She was standing with the bills in her hand, considering what could be done, when her father came into the room, and saw with astonishment the evident perplexity and distress of her countenance.

"What is the matter, my dear child?"

"Only the expenses of the school-house, and also of the repairs I have been making in some of the cottages, papa ; and these are the bills—and they are much larger than I had expected."

"Did not Mr. Hickey make an agreement with your artificers?"

"No, papa, and indeed I——"

"Oh ! Mr. Hickey, in all such cases that should be done."

"Yes, Sir ; but I believe my lady did not like that I should interfere about those little jobs."

"Well, well, Hickey ! we must try now to make the best of it. Have you examined the charges—are they fair?"

"I really do not know, Sir ; I have not looked closely into the work, nor did I see the bills till this morning."

"At all events the work must be duly examined. I will go and look at it : give me the bills. Evelyn, my dear, I will see what has been done ; and, Hickey, you will meet me at the school-house. But what is all this about the widow Green's house?"

"It is only her house that I have repaired. I will go along with you, if you please, papa, and tell you her history in our walk."

"Come, then, my little Evelyn : I fear you have been left too much to manage for yourself ; but we must try now to repair our errors."

Evelyn felt a little more at ease. She was conscious that she deserved reproof, and was surprised at her father's mildness ; but he thought the most effectual reproof was to let her feel the consequences of her imprudence ; and he wished to form Evelyn's judgment and subdue her pride by reason more than by reproach.

Just as they were setting out on their walk to the widow Green's, Evelyn was informed that Mr. Plunket wished to speak to her. He was the farmer whom she had asked to give a neighbour of his a passage through his land. He was shown into a waiting-room in one of the towers, where people on business were always received. Requesting her father, who was examining the bills, to follow her soon, she hastened to him. She had intended that her reception should be a very courteous one; but his countenance expressed such discontent and displeasure that it at once repelled her, and, instead of the usual kindness of her manner, she coldly said, "I am glad to see you, Mr. Plunket." He bowed.

"I suppose you are come to answer my note in person."

He bowed again. "Exactly so, Ma'am," said he.

"I had flattered myself, Mr. Plunket, that my note would have been sooner answered, as it was to request a favour."

"Yes, Ma'am, a favour indeed!—and such a one as I was never asked before. A very extraordinary one, I must say, for any landlord to ask."

"I did not think it would appear so extraordinary," said Evelyn.

"What, Ma'am!—not extraordinary—isn't it? The like was never heard before. Why the new-born babe might have known it was no small thing to ask a passage through an independent farmer's land—and not for yourself, either, but for that fellow, who ought rather to be driven off the estate."

"I do not know why he should," said Evelyn sturdily.

"As you don't know why, I must inform you that you have not on your whole property a more mean-spirited and deceitful creature. And is it to such a fellow, indeed—a wretch so false—that I am to open all my fields, and to give him leave to watch me and mine? No, no, Ma'am, it's not that way I am to be treated; and if any one of your people here had any sense you would not have asked it."

"I was not aware, Sir, that it was improper. I have never heard anything bad of him. I did not think——"

"No, Ma'am, it is plain enough you did not think—you did not consider that one of your principal tenants was entitled to some little respect. I have a lease, Miss O'Brien,

that will last beyond your life or mine, and I am as independent with that lease as you are yourself; and I must therefore freely tell you it's not to such a fellow as that I'd give a pass into my holding—no, nor to any one except yourself, Miss O'Brien. Your grandfather would never have dreamt of asking me to do such a thing; and when you know your countrymen better you will not make such a request to them again for any one—but for such a creature as that! Why, Ma'am, I wonder your steward did not tell you his character! And where was your agent?—he was the person who should have stirred in the business, if any one. I am sorry, Miss O'Brien, to see you look so much disappointed and displeased; but truth, Ma'am, must be spoken, and I am just telling you a plain bit of wholesome truth, which indeed you ought to have known, or to have been told if you——”

Mr. Desmond's entrance interrupted him, or he might have gone on for ever, for Evelyn was so astounded at the torrent of reproof which he poured forth, that she made no attempt to interrupt him. He bowed to Mr. Desmond, and began again.

“If you wished for a passage for yourself, Miss O'Brien” (his tone beginning to moderate), “I am in duty bound to give it to you; but for that fellow—that——!”

“And pray of what has he been guilty?” she asked.

“Oh, Ma'am, his character is notorious to every man, woman, and child in the parish—and I need not tell you all the dirty tricks of which he has been guilty. You must not expect me to be an informer, as he is himself. No, Miss, you don't understand these things.”

“I am sorry, Mr. Plunket, to find that my daughter has been induced by her good-nature to commit a mistake, in making an application to you for a pass through some of your fields. You must consider that she is inexperienced in business.”

“Yes, indeed, Sir, that's plain enough. I suppose she has been used to different ways in England. It's a pity she has been bred among those Saxons, and has therefore never learned to understand or care for our rights.”

“She is very true to her country, however:—perhaps a little too ready to yield to every petition; but she appears to

have had a strong lesson now from you, and, as you have given your answer, there is no reason to detain you any longer. Good day, Mr. Plunket."

"Good morning, Sir. But I wish to say that I have no objection to Miss O'Brien passing through my land herself, and also that the game is at her service. The partridges are abundant; and when the proper day comes, if you like to have a day's shooting, Sir, you will be welcome."

"I thank you, Sir, but I believe the game is reserved for the landlord in all the old leases on this land, though my daughter has not claimed it, but I am no sportsman."

Mr. Plunket looked rather confounded at Mr. Desmond's answer about the game; his indignation had now exhausted itself, and, with a more conciliatory voice, he asked Evelyn if he could be of any use to her. She had scarcely overcome the effects of his harangue, but thanked him with coldness, and as much calmness as she could command.

He then left the room to her infinite satisfaction, and she set out immediately to walk with her father to the widow Green's.

On their way thither Evelyn told him all the particulars about the poor woman, and the notice to quit; also her own promise to give a renewal of her lease. Mr. Desmond shook his head as she finished, and, looking very grave but not angry, he said, "I fear you have got into very unpleasant difficulties: but I hope that you may derive two advantages at least from them—more prudence in forming your plans, and more patience in regard to their execution."

The neatness of the widow Green and her children, and of her house, pleased Mr. Desmond, who acknowledged to Evelyn that he was not surprised at her being so much interested about her. They found her busily employed when they went in, and it was plainly her habit to be so. She welcomed Evelyn, saying she had been wishing so much to show her how comfortable the house had been made; and then, curtsying to Mr. Desmond, she pointed out all that her lady had done for her; and, warmly expressing her gratitude, finished at last with, "Oh! Sir, it is she that has a warrant for heaven!"

As soon as he could disengage himself from the overflowings of her gratitude, Mr. Desmond, along with Hickey, examined and partly measured all that had been done. He found that some of the charges were really exorbitant. Evelyn took pains to understand all the remarks her father made: he pointed out to her several instances of bad work, and by quietly explaining the leading principles of that sort of examination of work, and showing the more obvious faults, he endeavoured to give her some general ideas of the value of the time and materials, and enable her to judge of demands to which he was pretty well convinced that she would often subject herself in her anxiety to promote the comfort of the poor. Hickey appeared to understand such things very well; and in their walk home Mr. Desmond exhorted Evelyn to employ him from thenceforth, both to make previous agreements with her workmen, and also to superintend the execution of the work and see it well finished.

"I am sorry you did not show us the widow's cottage the day we walked to the school; your mother and Mabel would have been at it. Do you know why you did not?"

"Why, papa? Yes; I know I was very foolish."

"Yes, Evelyn, you were; and something more than what you call foolish. Your pride was hurt at my showing how ignorant you were of the manner in which such works should be executed? You were angry because your self-sufficiency was offended? But you forgot that, whatever you might pretend to, no one could suppose you could form any judgment of these sort of things."

"I am afraid you are right, dear papa."

"Well, then, let this probing have a salutary effect; pride has influenced you in many ways—conquer it, for it is a bad companion. It made you reject the advice or assistance of Mrs. Manvers; it determined you not to apply to your steward, because he warned you that your allowance would not be sufficient for so many extra expenses. This same enemy induced you to make a promise, that you had no right to make, to the widow Green, because you were indignant that Mr. Driver and the agent should have any control over you—forgetting, my poor little girl, that you are under the

control of the law, which makes your will or your promise of no effect while you are a minor. But I will give you no more instances now, my dear Evelyn, of your pride and self-sufficiency ; these are enough to show you that I have been aware of that fatal weakness ; and now I will try to cut a little off the amount of these demands and show your artificers that you are not to be a prey to them. I must say, however, that the mason does not seem to have made an overcharge."

"Oh ! I am glad of it," exclaimed Evelyn, in the midst of all her mortification ; "I always thought him honest ; he has such a good countenance ; besides, he advised me to repair the old walls of the widow Green's house instead of building a new one—so I know he must be trustworthy ; though Mrs. Manvers said I ought not to have left all to himself in repairing Green's house as I wished."

"Well, my love, I am glad your skill in physiognomy has been so successful ; I only wish it had saved you from the other troublesome vexations of this day."

"Thank you, papa : indeed they have come one after another like the misfortunes of Job ; but, unfortunately, unlike his, they were all caused by my own faults. But at all events I am delighted that poor Mrs. Green and her family are so comfortable now !"

When they entered the library every one inquired the result of the visit to the widow Green's cottage ; and Mabel, throwing her arms round her neck, said, "Dear Evelyn ! I have been pitying you so much—suffering so many vexations at once, and particularly that your poor widow should see how much you were embarrassed on her account."

"Thank you, dear Mabel ! She was so anxious to pour forth her blessings that she did not take notice of the remarks my father made to Mr. Hickey. As to myself I have learned so much prudence and caution to-day that I am afraid I shall become quite hard-hearted."

"No, no, Evelyn," said Mr. Desmond ; "but you will, I trust, gradually learn just sufficient wisdom to enable you to say no, when you ought not to yield."

"Oh ! yes, papa, I am sure she will," said Mabel affectionately ; though when one has the will and the power, it is

not easy to resist the too tempting pleasure of giving; but when she becomes a little more firm towards her unreasonable petitioners, she will be very like that pretty vegetable ivory about which Gerald and I have just been reading."

"Too true, indeed," he replied laughing, "for she said herself that she should become quite hard-hearted; you know the ivory-nut is hard enough to be turned and polished."

"Yes, Mr. Gerald," replied Mabel, "but you seem to forget that what appears like ivory was first a milky fluid, intended, as the description says, to nourish the young plant, and then gradually changes its nature, till it acquires the beauty and solidity of real ivory; when, in like manner, it may be turned into various shapes. So what I mean is that, without losing her sweetness, she will be as firm, solid, and polished as the ivory-nut, and, like it, easily worked to every useful purpose."

"Well, you have *worked* that out very well, Mabel; so she shall be our polished ivory-nut from henceforth," said Gerald.

"Yes, she has made out her case in a very workmanlike way, and you are all dear children," said Mr. Desmond, kissing the forehead of each.

"But all this time, my dear Mabel, I do not know to what nut you allude," said Evelyn, "though I do well understand the kindness of your endeavour to comfort me."

"Is it possible that you should never have seen any vegetable ivory in London! I will tell you what I have just read about it, and then I will show you a little box which my aunt sent me some time ago."

"But, Mabel, do you mean that ivory is really found on a tree?"

"I do indeed. A nut, about the size of a hen's egg, is produced by a species of palm which grows in Peru and New Grenada, and which is called *Tagna*,* or *Cabeza de Negro* (negro's head), by the natives. The nut is of a rough and clumsy shape, and brown outside; but when it has become solid, and that you cut through it with a saw, the inside appears white and smooth, like a lump of nice ivory."

* *Phytolophas macrocarpa*.

"How wonderful!" Evelyn exclaimed: "the kernel hard instead of the shell, like that of plums and peaches and other stone-fruit; and of nice white ivory too!"

"The pure white of the kernel is peculiar to that species of palm," said Mrs. Manvers; "but there is another palm which supplies materials to the turner."

"But I do not understand of what use that hard part of the nut can be to the seed," said Evelyn.

"That part of the kernel which is so like ivory," replied Mrs. Manvers, "is called the albumen; which is, you know, the nutritious substance that surrounds the embryo plant, and is intended as food for it when it first begins to grow. This albumen is of very different consistence in the seeds of different plants: in corn it hardens into the substance which is ground into flour; it is the spicy part of the nutmeg; and you have eaten it in the fleshy part of the cocoa-nut. The same portion of the fruit becomes quite hard in other palms also—the date, for instance—but not white; and also the African doun-palm, of which, at Thebes, in Egypt, the turners make beads for rosaries, from its remarkably hard and stony kernels."

"But," said Mr. Desmond, "I must make you acquainted, Evelyn, with a very curious circumstance in the economy of the ivory-palm. When I last visited Kew I had the pleasure of seeing in the magnificent hot-house there several young plants of it in different stages of their growth. The active and enlightened philosopher at the head of that establishment had received a box full of the nuts from a friend at Bogotà de Fè, the capital of New Grenada; and having sown them at different depths, he was surprised at finding the nuts all appearing in a certain time on the surface of the earth in the box; and in a few days they had risen even above it by means of a strong radicle which they had thrown downwards. I myself saw some of these nuts on the surface of the pots, and others standing two or three inches in the air, each supported on its strong radicle; while a beautiful little plumula, with delicate pinnated leaves, had shot upwards. Those plants which had been earliest sown, and were in a more advanced state, had exchanged their pretty pinnated leaves for long

single leaves, sheathing the stem, as in other palms; and with those leaves people cover their houses in the country it comes from."

Mabel asked what became of the nut when the plant grew up, and whether it always continued attached to the young tree. To which her father replied, that it did continue there till its office had been so completely fulfilled that the solid bony matter within had been all absorbed, and then the nut falls empty and useless to the ground.

"It continues for a good while attached to the stem, I suppose, just as the acorn does to the young oak?"

"Yes," said Mr. Desmond; "but how different the destiny of the two! The one to be turned into ornaments for a lady's dressing-table or workbox—the other producing the stately oak, one day to form the ribs of some huge man-of-war or industrious merchant-ship, either to defend our shores and our homes from aggression, or to bear her cargoes to distant lands, and to convey the blessings of commerce, knowledge, and civilization throughout the world."

CHAPTER XLV

Job — His Predictions — His Genealogy — His Trials.

"You compared yourself to Job yesterday (your 'day of misfortunes'), Evelyn, which reminded me that, in your search for the most ancient prophecies relative to our Lord, you seem to have overlooked the predictions to be found in the book of Job, certainly some of the most ancient."

"But then, papa, I have been told that Job was an imaginary character."

"Some critics," replied Mr. Desmond, "have represented his book as a dramatic and fictitious composition; but there is good reason to believe that there was such a person, who did undergo severe trials. The prophet Ezekiel ranks Job with Noah and Daniel, and in such a manner as to imply that they were three of the most pious of men; the apostle James records his patience; and surely neither of those inspired writers would have cited him as an example had the book or the existence of Job been questionable. Besides, the early admission of the book of Job into the sacred canon is, I think, another very strong proof of its veracity."

"The geographical precision, too," said Mrs. Manvers, "with which the situation of his residence and that of his friends is described, seems, as some writers have remarked, intended to show the certainty of the history."

"Yes, indeed," said Mr. Desmond, "it is a strong concomitant proof of the existence of such a person. The next question is, of course, at what time did Job live? But that may not, perhaps, be as easily answered. However, the Bible chronology dates the trials of Job twenty-nine years before the Israelites quitted Egypt; and several circumstances have been pointed out by learned men to prove that the time of his misfortunes must have been as early as that period, or perhaps even still more remote."

"Do not some commentators infer that Job was not a Hebrew, from St. Paul's not having included him among those whom he names in Hebrews xl. as remarkable for their faith?" said Mrs. Manvers.

"Yes, such an opinion has been advanced," said Mr. Desmond; "yet there are several arguments in favour of his being a descendant of Abraham, though possibly not of the line of Jacob."

"Who, then, do you think he could have been, papa?"

"There is," replied he, "at the close of the Septuagint translation of the book of Job a note which is considered of some authority, in which it is stated that Job was lineally descended from Esau, in whose territory was situated the land of Uz, where Job dwelt, being a part of Idumæa; and now, if you look at the genealogy of Esau in the Bible, you may find distinct mention of Job, and also of Eliphaz, one of his visitors."

"I have opened the chapter, but I do not see Job here," said Evelyn.

"Look again, my dear, and you will find *Jobab*, which is the same name, with the slight addition of a final syllable,—a variation that is frequently observable in Scripture names; Jobab was the son of Zerah, grandson of Esau, and was consequently fifth in descent from Abraham. You may also observe in the same chapter that Eliphaz was one of Esau's sons, and therefore great-uncle to Job, which accounts at once for the manner in which he speaks to him, and for what he says of his own great age."

"But, papa, there is nothing said in the Bible of his having descended from Abraham; so how can we feel sure about it?"

"If it was stated there, my dear, we could have no doubt about it. It is a question open to discussion; but it appears to me that an important argument in favour of his being of Abraham's family is, that we have not a single instance of any one of the canonical books anterior to the advent of Christ having been written by any other than a Hebrew. They may record indeed the sayings of those who were not Israelites, but that none were written except by Hebrews is the

opinion of men of the deepest learning. The chosen people were the especial depository of the word of God, and we cannot, therefore, suppose that, had the book been written by one not a descendant of Abraham, it would have been admitted into the sacred canon."

"I do not see Bildad's or Zephar's names in the genealogy," said Evelyn: "who were they?"

"They are supposed to have been princes of the land bordering on Edom," replied Mr. Desmond, "worshippers of the true God, though not Hebrews, and perhaps descended from some of the original inhabitants of the land before Esau settled there."

Mrs. Manvers remarked that, by comparing the genealogies of the two families, Moses appears to be sixth in descent from Abraham, while Job was one step nearer to him, so that in that case Moses and Job could not, strictly speaking, be contemporaries.

"Learned people are of opinion," replied Mr. Desmond, "that Job's trials must have taken place several years before the flight of Moses into Midian, while the Israelites were still dwelling in peace and prosperity in Egypt, before 'the new king arose that knew not Joseph;' and, therefore, it may have been written by Moses, as any historian may record what has occurred before his own time. But, on the other hand, there are strong reasons to think that the book was composed prior to the time of Moses, such as the silence of Job with regard to the mighty wonders that attended the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, which, from the proximity of the two countries, must have been known to him; yet he makes no allusion to them, or to the remarkable dispensation which then took place; and surely he who spoke so beautifully on the ways of Providence, would not, could not have omitted to mention the passage of the Red Sea, the manna which supported the Israelites in the desert, and all the other miraculous circumstances of their forty years' pilgrimage. Indeed, from his silence respecting the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Dr. Hales infers, in his celebrated Chronology, that the book of Job was composed even before Abraham's migration to Canaan."

"But do not you think," said Mrs. Manvers, "that Job alludes to the passage of the Red Sea, when he says in chapter xxvi. 'He divideth the sea with his power'?"

"It does seem very apposite," replied he; "but as the chapter refers chiefly to the Creation, that verse is thought to allude only to the separation of the waters at that time, like that fine passage in a subsequent chapter, 'Hitherto shalt thou come but no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed,' or perhaps to the Deluge. He would not have so slightly mentioned the wonderful division of the Red Sea."

"And the manners and customs, as they appear in the book of Job," said Mrs. Manvers, "seem better to correspond with that earlier period."

"Yes," said Mr. Desmond; "Job evidently acted as high priest in his own family, according to the custom of the primitive patriarchal times, for the institution of a regular priesthood appears not to have taken place till about the time of Abraham. Another proof of the antiquity of the book is, that the only kind of idolatry it notices was the Sabeian, or the worship of the heavenly host, the earliest idolatry on record."

"Which do you, papa, consider it most probable—that Job was himself the author of the book, or that it was written by some one else; by Moses, for instance, as you mentioned?"

"The most learned critics differ on that, as on all subjects of ancient research," replied Mr. Desmond; "but I lean to the opinion of those who think that, like the books of Isaiah or Jeremiah, it was written by Job himself, who could best narrate his own story. I think the idea stamps an additional value on the work, for the character of Job was held in high estimation among the Israelites, as appears evident from the manner in which he is mentioned by Ezekiel, and by the apostle James; and also from his book being actually quoted among the sacred Scripture by St. Paul, which, we may be assured, would not have been the case, had he not been considered by them as an inspired writer."

"But suppose that the exact date of the book can never be ascertained," said Evelyn, "do you think that of much consequence, papa?"

"Yes, certainly, it would add to the value of the book in every way as a faithful and authentic monument of the language, manners, and religion of the earlier patriarchal times; and, still more, as containing such a reference to the future Redeemer as shows not only that Job was inspired, but that there was in the most remote ages such an expectation of our Lord, and such remains of the early worship of Jehovah, as ought to have been sufficient to preserve the Gentiles from idolatry."

"That remarkable passage," said Mrs. Manvers, "which so emphatically predicts the Saviour, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth,' would appear to come from an inspired person; for it is a more definite prediction of that great event than we find in any of the ancient prophets. I cannot think, though asserted by some writers, that it relates merely to the miraculous recovery of Job from his bodily sufferings."

"That Job had little expectation of his recovery," Mr. Desmond rejoined, "appears in many parts of the book. Besides, we cannot suppose that, merely to express his hope of restoration to health, he would exclaim, 'Oh that my words were graven on the rock for ever!' It rather seems that, for his own consolation under his sufferings, which were, as St. Peter says, to prove his faith, he declares his faith and hope in a divine Redeemer and his triumphant expectation of a resurrection from the dead to the immediate and everlasting enjoyment of the presence of God. Besides, it is well known to the learned that the Hebrew word, here translated Redeemer, is also used in many other places in Scripture, in the full sense of the word, as redeemer or deliverer, and appears to be always applied to the same person."

"May we then suppose that Job was gifted, as one of the prophets in after times, with the full knowledge of the doctrine of the Redemption and of the Resurrection?" said Evelyn.

"We cannot now discover how far his knowledge extended, but we must be convinced, my dear child, that, if he was not fully acquainted with the whole, he was, at least, comforted by an assured confidence in the coming of Christ as his Redeemer, and by the hope, through Him, of his own resur-

rection to bliss. It was to Job 'as a light that shineth in a dark place until the day should dawn;' and though, perhaps, seen but obscurely, it was sufficient to guide his steps and to support his patience by faith and hope under his accumulated trials and sufferings."

"Are there many other prophecies in the book of Job?" Evelyn asked.

"None," replied her father, "and it has been therefore objected by some writers, that the same degree of prophetic knowledge does not appear in other parts of the book; but there are many passages in which, though not quite so distinct as express prophecy, yet do most strongly inculcate and enforce a firm belief in a future resurrection; which you know is the great object of all prophecy. His final declaration of his conviction of that glorious change shows his full persuasion of the benefit of the Atonement, and of his acceptance through that Redeemer whom he foresaw. This hope is happily the privilege of all believers; it opens to our view the strongest consolation, and, enlightened as we are by the Gospel, it ought to be not only our refuge under sin, but our guiding light to bring us safely through the temptations which crowd around us all."

CHAPTER XLVI.

Visit to The Cliffs — Walk along the Sea-shore — Tides — Barnacles —
When perfect they cease to see — Purple Echinus — Sea Anemone
— The faithful Dog — Sand the most efficient Boundary of the
Ocean.

THE invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Vincent having been repeated, the party from Cromdarragh Castle went on the appointed day to The Cliffs, where they were cordially welcomed.

Going out on such visits of a few days was rather a novelty to Mabel and Gerald; but being always habituated to good manners at home, they behaved among strangers with politeness and modesty. They were so much in the habit of conversing freely with their father and mother, that people accustomed only to children who were constantly in the school-room with their governess were surprised both at their freedom from shyness and at their attention to conversation.

Mabel, indeed, had much natural modesty and reserve, and yet was ready at all times when called on to express her thoughts well, and tell clearly whatever she knew when applied to relative to any subject under discussion. She was animated, and her mind alive to every new object of interest, but her calmness and self-possession preserved her from all extremes; and though feeling affectionate sympathy for Evelyn, she could scarcely understand her sister's enthusiastic impatience about everything that caught her fancy. Her fair and smiling face was always expressive of sweetness and good sense, while Evelyn's varied from time to time with an uncertainty of expression that might have puzzled a physiognomist.

An early hour had been appointed for their arrival at The Cliffs in order that the young people might have a race on

the sands in the afternoon, and they found Miss Vincent ready to accompany them immediately, so that, before the tide came in, they might visit a little cove where there was a most velvet-like strand, as well as the greatest variety of shells to be found on the coast. The fresh smell of the ocean—the cliffs, which bounded the sandy cove, gilt by the sunbeams—and the multitude of fishing-boats in the offing, the sails of which sometimes for a moment reflected a glancing beam, put the young people into an ecstasy.

“ Oh ! what I would give,” exclaimed Gerald, “ to have a row on such a smooth and beautiful blue sea ! ”

“ We cannot procure a boat at this time of day,” replied Miss Vincent, “ and must content ourselves with rambling about here. Let us walk towards the North Cliff while we can, as the tide will soon drive us away.”

The north cliffs were still more beautiful than those they had first seen ; the zone of golden light thrown upon their summits by the rays of the declining sun enchanted Evelyn, and, after they had faded to their sober evening tint of grey, she still wished to linger there. Miss Vincent warned her that it was time to retire from the sands, but Evelyn entreated her to remain there a little longer, that they might compare the effect upon the cliffs of the mellow beams of the moon with the glowing scene they had just witnessed.

“ It will be impossible to remain here more than a few minutes,” said Miss Vincent, smiling goodnaturedly at Evelyn’s ardour ; “ for the flood-tide is fast advancing : see that great wave swelling as it rolls towards us, and, as it falls, spreading a line of creamy foam along the sandy beach.”

“ Yes ; and another and another,” said Mabel : “ now a very, very large one—now two lesser ones—and then again a large one, but not so tremendous as the first that we observed.”

“ It is thought,” said Miss Vincent, “ that every ninth wave is larger than the others ; some say, every third. I have often watched them, and think I have observed that variation ; but yet they do not always seem to be in actually regular succession.”

“ How curious it is,” said Evelyn, “ to look at the smooth,

placid surface of the sea at some distance from the shore, and then to observe the first swelling of the waves ; and how they rise higher and higher before they break with such fury on the sloping sand !”

“ Yes,” said Miss Vincent, “ and I have been told that it is because that long slope of the beach, under the water, stops the progress of the lower part of the wave ; so that the upper part, continuing its velocity, tumbles over, and breaks into foam.”

“ But is it not the tide which you said was coming in that makes these waves roll in here almost to our feet ?” said Evelyn.

“ I am but little able to explain, or even repeat, to you,” said Miss Vincent, “ what my father told me on that subject one day that we were looking at a prodigious surf roaring up the beach ; but I was assured that the tides, which rise and fall twice every day, have nothing to say to the great ocean swell. That swell is produced by the action of the wind upon the surface of the water, and agitates the sea all the same whether it be flood or ebb tide.”

“ Then why,” Evelyn asked, “ does all this froth and foam come so much nearer to us now than when we first ran down here ?”

“ Because,” replied Miss Vincent, “ the flood-tide has raised the whole body of the sea to a higher level, and so, of course, its breaking waves come higher on the beach.”

“ What a sublime object the ocean is !” exclaimed Evelyn. “ What a wonderful idea it seems that such a mighty mass of water should so regularly rise and sink alternately twice every twenty-four hours, and all that without any visible cause !”

“ Yes,” said Miss Vincent ; “ and besides its tidal movements, how astonishing are its powerful currents, which seem to be formed in different parts of the globe, and which run to such a vast distance. Papers sealed up in a bottle, and thrown into the sea in the West Indies, have been landed on our shores ; and I have read that icebergs are sometimes carried from the Polar Sea as far as the Azores Islands before they melt.”

“ I remember reading,” said Mabel, “ that it was in consequence of that polar current that the brave and skilful Sir

Edward Parry was obliged to give up his attempt to reach the north pole, by travelling over the fields of ice, for he found that they were drifting towards the south faster than his party could travel over them to the north."

"Oh!" cried Gerald, "a wave has washed over my feet—how warm it feels—I must wait for another!"

"No, no,—come away," said Miss Vincent; "we have stayed too long."

With some reluctance the youthful party quitted the shore. The overhanging rocks, the slightly-ribbed sands, the multitude of shells, the busy seagulls skimming over or dipping into each successive wave, the foaming breakers, and the tranquil fleet of fishing-boats, and, more than all, the glowing sun sinking rapidly as it were into the Western Ocean, and spreading its rich tints over the hills—all these completely occupied their thoughts and their conversation till they reached the house; and so much was Evelyn delighted, that she could not repress a regret that Cromdarragh Castle was not on the sea-side. How delightful, she said, it would be, to live on a rock directly over such a glorious scene!

The evening passed agreeably; the conversation was varied by that of a few other guests who were staying at The Cliffs, one of whom had been an unexpected but agreeable addition to the party—Mr. Fleming, a traveller whom Mr. Vincent had accidentally met in a little wild narrow lane, commonly called in that country a *boreen*; and perceiving that he was in the disagreeable predicament of trying to go on with a tired horse, had hospitably invited to accompany him home. Though within the last few years that part of Ireland has been much improved by roads having been made where there had been no means of communication, there are still many places where the hospitality of a resident gentleman is of essential service to the traveller, particularly one who, like Mr. Fleming, went out of the beaten track in search of objects interesting to the naturalist only.

Among other evening occupations, Miss Vincent showed her young companions the shells and sea-weeds she had from time to time collected on the shore, and Mr. Fleming observed that some of the shells were very rare. He pronounced her

sea-weeds to have been nicely dried, and expressed some surprise at their being rightly named.

"I was taught both to preserve and class them," said she, "by a lady at Hastings, when I was there, and who made a very nice collection."

The next morning Mr. Vincent took his guests, soon after breakfast, to the magnificent cliffs near his house. The walk was delightful to all the party, and was rendered particularly amusing to Gerald by the gambols of Lion, a fine Newfoundland dog, Mr. Vincent's constant attendant; he had soon made acquaintance with Gerald and Mabel, and occupied their attention till they arrived at the rocks, when their minds were engaged by a scene very new to both them and Evelyn. From the top of the cliffs they had a boundless view of the Western Ocean, and, though several hundred feet high, Mr. Vincent said he had often seen and felt the fine spray fly over them, covering him as it fell with its descending drops.

They approached the edge of the cliffs as near as it was prudent, to look at the perpendicular face of the rocks, Mrs. Desmond holding Gerald's hand, lest in his new delight he should carelessly go too near the brink. They saw the clear and beautiful waves dashing against the rocks as if in perpetual anger, and observed the caves and grotesquely-shaped hollows worn away by their continual force.

After a long time spent in admiration of a sight so sublime and impressive, Mr. Vincent led his friends by a winding path down to the little sandy cove, in order to search for rare shells; but their attention was attracted by a group of fishermen eagerly examining something on the shore, one of whom, on seeing Mr. Vincent, hastily ran towards him with the information that they had found a great curiosity that morning.

It was a large beam, which they had seen floating on the sea, and had towed ashore; it was literally covered with barnacles in all stages, large and small, some in clusters, others scattered singly. Many appeared full-grown, while others were extremely small, their little shells apparently fixed closely into the wood, having no connecting cartilage, or at least one so small as to be scarcely distinguishable. They were in such

profusion, that, though multitudes had been already rubbed off by the fishermen and scattered over the shore, the beam seemed still thickly covered with them. Some were yet alive, and Mr. Vincent showed Gerald the little feather-like feelers or appendages which had been formerly mistaken for birds' feathers, and which had given rise to the extraordinary idea that the barnacle-goose was actually produced from those shells.

Miss Vincent pointed out the very small size of some of those which were attached to the wood; and Mr. Fleming, observing the intelligent interest the young people took in all she said, told them some remarkable particulars of those curious little creatures. "Their proper name," said he, "is *Balanus*, or *Pentilisma*. A few years ago an Irish naturalist, Dr. Thompson, was, according to custom, searching in the shallow sea, with a muslin towing-net, for minute marine animals, when, on looking at the contents of the net, he found one which appeared new to him, and, collecting some more of the same character, he placed them in a glass vessel, with just as much sea-water as would preserve them, and yet enable him to examine them with a magnifying-glass."

"With a magnifying-glass!" exclaimed Evelyn. "None of these that we see here require to be magnified."

"No," returned Mr. Fleming; "but those little creatures were not more than a tenth of an inch in length, and had some resemblance to a miniature muscle, having a two-valved shell and hinge, and their eyes were placed, like those of crabs and lobsters, on little delicate stalks. In about eight days he found that two of them had changed their first shells, and were firmly adhering to the bottom of the vessel, and had distinctly assumed the form of young barnacles—just such as the least of those you see here, but, as I mentioned, still smaller. On the tenth day he had the pleasure of seeing another of them in the very act of throwing off its shell and attaching itself to the glass, where the two first were forming their new shells; and he now saw what you will no doubt think a very curious circumstance—that, as the new shells grew, their eyes gradually disappeared."

"How beautiful," exclaimed Mr. Desmond, "are all the

provisions of nature ! You perceive, my dear children, that while in their previous state, having to swim about from one place to another, their eyes were necessary ; but when they change to that state in which they adhere permanently to some other substance, their power of vision would be useless, and is therefore obliterated."

"Poor creatures !" said Mabel, "they do not become more perfect, then, and better able to move about, as grubs do in general when they change."

"In the usual metamorphoses of insects," said Mr. Fleming, "the crawling grub assumes a more developed and perfect form, being supplied with beautiful wings to carry it as it wills through the regions of the air ; but here the infinite variety of the creation takes a different course, and the barnacle exchanges its free state of existence and enjoyment for one where it cannot move, and, as far as we can perceive, is only allowed to touch and taste."

"I wonder whether these barnacles are as abundant in the sea in all parts of the world as they must be wherever this great beam came from?" said Gerald. "But perhaps they are confined to our Irish sea."

"Dr. Thompson thinks," replied Mr. Fleming, "that in its moveable state it may be found in every sea ; and wherever it is, we may suppose it is always on the watch for something on which to establish itself. You have heard, I am sure, how mischievous barnacles are to ships, on the bottoms of which they fix themselves. But it is curious that they are found in seas where there is nothing to which they can attach themselves. Captain Millar, a friend of Dr. Thompson, who made a voyage to Guayana, told him that along the whole region of coast between the Orinoco and the Amazon rivers there is nothing but mud, and that the adjacent country is a perfect flat—one vast deposit of rich earth—and therefore without either rock or stone, or any solid substance which can afford a resting-place for these animals ; yet Captain Millar, being detained at George Town for three months, on taking up his anchor, found the fluke which stood up in the water covered with barnacles and oysters, all heaped upon each other so closely that a pin's point, he said, could not have reached the

iron. Now the curious circumstance in this account is, that such little delicate creatures should be floating about in seas, seeking for a resting-place, where nature apparently affords none; for in general instinct directs animals to their proper locality."

"I suppose any stick or solid substance thrown into that sea would soon become covered in the same manner?" said Evelyn.

"Yes, and to things much less solid than a stick, for the barnacle adheres to anything it meets—even to a feather dropped from the wing of a sea-bird, the back of a whale, and to shells of every kind. On a cowry, for instance, which a friend of mine has in his museum, there is a barnacle attached; and I may mention a very remarkable circumstance that we perceived: the highly-polished outer coat of that cowry-shell had completely covered over the barnacle, proving at once that it must have been a long time there, and also that fresh deposits or layers of the shining substance of the shell are thus formed from time to time."

"Perhaps these creatures, having been sometimes attached to a feather, may have given rise to the idea of their change into a bird," said Gerald; "or rather it may, perhaps, have confirmed the idea to those who had happened to find a barnacle fixed upon a feather."

"A very fair suggestion," said Mr. Fleming.

"You mentioned oysters as having also attached themselves to Captain Millar's anchor; do you mean that oysters also float about in search of a settlement?" said Mr. Vincent.

"I confess I am not much acquainted with the natural history of the oyster," replied Mr. Fleming; "but I know it is a fact that the young, when separated from the parent, is perfect in form, though quite in miniature, and that it then swims about freely till instinct directs it to fix itself to some solid substance, there to remain. But such muddy water as that in the neighbourhood of George Town is not natural to it, and we can only take for granted that, like our own young people, youthful oysters are sent to travel previously to their settling for life."

This idea excited the laughter of more than Gerald; and

soon afterwards Mr. Fleming asked Miss Vincent if she could direct him to a bed of purple urchins or echini, which he had been told was on that part of the coast.

"Oh! yes, I know it well, and did intend to have taken my friends to see it. It will, however, cost us rather a long walk, for it is in another little sandy cove like this, beyond that great cliff,—we could easily go to it now, but I fear it may be too much for Mrs. Desmond."

"No, no," replied Mrs. Desmond; "I have been comfortably seated on this crag; and while much instructed by all Mr. Fleming has been saying, I have been amused watching these poor little sea anemonies nitched into the crevices of the rock. Look, Evelyn—Mabel—you may see three kinds here in this small space."

"Yes, I see," said Evelyn; "one crimson, another brown, and this pretty one striped, red, white, black, and green; what beautiful little blue tubercles round the mouth when it uncloses its curious arms!"

"I will gather some of them," said Miss Vincent, "and we can examine them at home. I once kept some in a saucer of sea-water, which produced the nicest little young creatures about a quarter of an inch in diameter, just like the parent in form, except that they had not yet acquired the blue tubercles."

Miss Vincent then gently worked the animal out of its crevice with a sort of knife made for such purposes, and, borrowing a little can from the fishermen who had called their attention to the barnacles, filled it with sea-water, and, placing the anemone in it, carried it away to the great satisfaction of all the party.

In their walk over the headland they often paused in order to admire the magnificent rocks along the coast, as they appeared in different points of view; and to watch the high swelling waves dashing against them, as well as the pretty little fishing-boats gliding about in the sunshine. As they slowly descended Mr. Vincent made them observe the remarkable change in the scene.

No longer bold cliffs proudly resisting the perpetual action of the waves, but yielding land gently sloping into a low bay

with a wide sandy beach, over which the sea seemed to have uncontrolled empire. It was a flat extent of sand, chiefly bare, though in some places covered with a slight vegetation.

Light gusts of wind, as they swept across the sand, were driving it inland in showers from the shore; and producing the prettiest little ripples on its surface; sometimes raising its particles in momentary columns, and realizing in miniature the description that Bruce and other travellers give of columns of sand in the deserts of Africa.

The whole appearance of the place was remarkable, and very different from the shore at the other side of the headland. A range of low rocks scarcely emerging from the beach marked where the line of the shore had once been; but now a vast expanse of sand filled the space which had formerly been a bay, and, stretching inland as far as the rocky barrier permitted, seemed to show that it had been formed there by the accumulation of sand driven in by the force of the winds and waves, and, being daily increased by the gradual decomposition of the cliffs, which were no longer granite, like those they had first visited, appeared now able to resist the sea and to prevent its further advance.

The wind continued to rise, the whirlwinds of sand became more troublesome, and the tide began to roll in: no urchin-bed was to be seen, for the walk had taken more time than Miss Vincent had calculated, and, as there was nothing further to detain them in this bleak and dreary place, the whole party unanimously agreed to take the shortest path homewards, carrying with them a little cargo of shells which Mr. Fleming pronounced to be worthy of examination, and which Miss Vincent hoped would compensate him for his disappointment.

Their way lay across the sands, and Mr. Vincent, taking the lead, advised all to follow in his track exactly, because in some directions there were dangerous places; then warning Gerald particularly against the greenish dark-coloured spots, he desired him to keep exactly in his track, as he knew where the moving or quick sands lay.

Gerald had no idea of the meaning of the quicksands; and for a few minutes followed Mr. Vincent carefully; but soon forgetting his injunction, and seeing something at a short

distance glistening in the sand, and yielding to a sudden impulse, he darted towards it in hopes of finding some wonderful curiosity—intending to return directly to the right path. But as he hastened rapidly forward, down went his feet in the soft sand ; in vain he threw up his arms and struggled to get himself out ; the more vigorous were his exertions the deeper he sank. He called loudly, but nobody heard him ; Lion, indeed, ran towards him, pawed and smelt the ground, and then ran away barking and howling—he felt quite forsaken.

The rest of the party had walked on, unconscious of his accident. Poor boy ! he felt that he was alone, and that he was in fault, and he bitterly repented his ill-timed curiosity. It was an awful moment : he heard no sound but that of the waves ; the sand seemed closing fast round him, it had covered his shoulders and throat ; his heart beat violently, though he could scarcely breathe ; one hand only was now uncovered, and he knew his head must soon sink.

The whole time was only a few moments, but it seemed hours while in such jeopardy. His courage, however, did not quite fail ; he still hoped that Providence would send some friendly hand to relieve him, and he watched anxiously for some sound, and soon he had the comfort of hearing the barking of the faithful Lion, who now came running towards him barking and jumping, and followed by Mr. Vincent, who, accompanied by Mr. Desmond, and a man with them, now appeared hastening towards him.

Lion, running to Gerald, seized hold of the hand which was now only partly above the sands, and gently held it till help came. It was but just in time to save him. The active boatman who came to his assistance, accustomed to the difficult task of extricating people from those sands, soon released poor Gerald ; but he was quite exhausted at first, and seemed almost to have lost all consciousness. The boatman insisted on carrying him across the sands, and, setting him on a little green slope, brought him a glass of water, and Gerald soon recovered his animation. His father, having handsomely rewarded the poor man, described to his little boy the distress and anxiety of Lion, who ran to Mr. Vincent barking violently ; and pulling his coat, though he tried to shake him

off, had at last attracted his notice—then, running to and fro, had made him distinctly understand there was some one in danger, and soon led him back so as to see Gerald in his miserable plight. Fortunately the man who had assisted him lived in a hut on the shore, and happened at the right moment to meet them on the path across the sands; no time was lost in running to the assistance of the little boy, who, understanding now how much he owed to the sagacious dog, kissed him, and a lasting friendship was established between him and his preserver.

The joy felt by all at seeing Gerald safely rescued from the danger he had been in may well be imagined, as well as the many times repeated caresses of the dog. After some time Mr. Desmond said, "You have had a good lesson to-day, my dear boy, on the folly of not taking advice—of want of obedience, I may say."

"Yes, yes, and a good lesson, young gentleman, on the nature of quicksands," said Mr. Vincent laughing.

"Yes, Sir," said Gerald, "but I did not know what you meant, for the sand appeared to be everywhere moving, the wind blew it about so much."

"Yes, it does so, my little fellow; and widely as it has spread over the shore here, it would have done so much more, and would be blown about our fine fertile fields," said Mr. Vincent, "if it were not that the same beneficent hand, that made the sand, gave us that grass which you see spread over the sands so abundantly. Its roots creep through the loose sand, and, spreading in all directions, make a kind of mat-work that, as it were, binds and confines it. Even the thick tufts of leaves, which you see spring from that grass, help also to restrain and fix this encroaching enemy. Try to pull one up; you find it does not very easily come, so matted are the roots and so deeply do they penetrate."

"And does any other plant ever grow in these sandy places, Sir?"

"In process of time the old leaves and roots decay," replied Mr. Vincent, "and form a natural soil into which a variety of seeds are conveyed by the winds and birds, and thus other plants are added till the covering is complete, and

the artificial soil thus made can be cultivated in some degree. See here this creeping potentilla, or silver weed as some call it—a very troublesome weed in our gardens, but a most useful one here; and so, too, is that pretty restharrow which you may perceive has spread itself over yonder bank.”

“Two admirable provisions of nature,” said Mr. Desmond, “are thus brought home to our understanding; the first, that certain plants are so formed as to require but a small proportion of nourishment, which may be supplied by mere sand; and, secondly, that other plants are furnished with the means of migration, so that they appear, as if by instinct, to come to those places where they can be most advantageous to man.”

“I believe there is some grass or plant of that kind in every country liable to encroaching sands,” said Mr. Fleming; “we find them mentioned by all observant travellers; very lately I happened to read an account of a sand-grass of Ladak, on the borders of Thibet—Long-na is the name by which it is usually known. It is described as growing loose on sandy soils, and forming a most efficacious network both on the surface and beneath it, for the roots sometimes strike two feet deep; thus securing it from being blown away by the powerful winds which sweep along the valleys.”

“But while we admire those various means which Nature has provided to prevent the encroaching sands from spreading over our cultivated fields,” said Mr. Desmond, “the sand itself supplies us with another striking instance of the foresight and perfect adaptation of means to the object with which all things have been endowed. We do not always consider this very sand in all its bearings. We complain of it; but we forget how completely it answers as the boundary of the ocean.”

“How do you mean, papa?” said Evelyn; “how can sand form a boundary in any place?”

“I mean, my dear, that, being perfectly insoluble in water, it is well adapted to resist its chemical action; it performs an office in which many hard rocks fail, and is, I may say, the only substance applicable to the purpose, for we know the effect of the lashing waves upon the hardest rock; and therefore this loose and yielding strand will remain for ages

a monument of the mighty effects which Providence achieves by the most minute agents."

"In speaking of sand, we must not forget," said Mrs. Desmond, "the many ways in which it is useful to us; forming as it does a necessary element in the manufacture of glass, and a most essential ingredient in the proper preparation of soil for vegetables and flowers, and useful in various other ways in domestic arrangement."

Mr. Vincent then said that he fully agreed with Mrs. Desmond, and could greatly amplify what she had said on the manner in which all things are balanced in this world, and yet all useful to us; but it was late, they were not yet near home, and a few drops of rain admonished him that it was time to move.—"Come on, then, my friends, and let us all be thankful that our good friend Gerald is safe."

CHAPTER XLVII.

Sea-side Ramble — Starfish — Animal Mechanism — Dye of the Periwinkle — Norwegian Naturalist — Sea-Eagle — Adventure of a Bird-Catcher — Corricles or Curracks — Skin Boats — Bernicle Goose.

THE following morning was calm and favourable in every way for another sea-side ramble, and Mr. Fleming, Mrs. Manvers, and all the younger individuals of the party, were so anxious to see the famous urchin-bed, that they set out at an early hour, in order to make the most of their time while the "coast was clear" from the troublesome tide. Miss Vincent led them directly to the little cove which the urchins had selected. It was still wet from the receding tide. Along the edge of the shore, where they had been thrown by the boisterous waves, lay numerous seaweeds and shells, and various specimens of the smaller inhabitants of the ocean. Among them were several starfish, and Mr. Fleming soon espied one which he seized with a loud exclamation of delight, for, at the first glance, it appeared to be an uncommon species.

"I have been fortunate," said he, "in finding this specimen of *Asteria*; but that does not abate my eagerness to find a purple urchin, and to see it in its own locality, which has been described to me as being among these limestone rocks. Many well-preserved specimens of it I have already seen."

"There then is the very place," said Miss Vincent; "in that little pool you will find several of them. I have often been down here at low water, when, as you see, these rocks are almost dry, and found them collected in this spot."

Mr. Fleming hastened to the little pool, which was, as he expected, among limestone rocks; and there, to his great satisfaction, he saw several of the purple urchins for which that coast is remarkable. Miss Vincent called the attention of

her companions to the hollow bed worked by each individual for itself in the solid rock, and like a little cup, just its own size, and fitting it without injuring the purple spines. This species of urchin is remarkable for its habit of boring in limestone rocks, and living in the hole it has made there. Several of them were close together, for they are gregarious; and it was a subject of great surprise to the young people that such a little creature could have the power of making a hollow in hard rock; but Mr. Fleming reminded them that, as the continual dropping of water wears the hardest stone, so may the constant efforts of the urchin produce far greater effect.

The whole group admired the deep purple colour of the spines contrasted by the grey limestone-rock, and brightened by the still remaining wet; the spines were all perfect, and so thickly set that they looked almost like a tuft of purple silk. Mabel inquired if these creatures made fresh holes for themselves wherever they went; but Mr. Fleming informed her that this species is stationary.

In rambling about among the rocks and sandy nooks, Evelyn found a remarkably large and handsome starfish, and, depositing it carefully in her little basket of seaweeds and shells, ran directly with her prize to Mr. Fleming. But what was her astonishment on opening the basket to find that her beautiful specimen was broken in many pieces! She declared it had been taken up quite gently, and she could not imagine what had happened to it. Mr. Fleming smiled at her vexation, and told her that it was one of the singular habits of this tribe to break themselves into pieces when removed from their native element; and that the only way of preserving them entire is to place the animal on its back, in which position, as a friend of his discovered, it seems to lose the power of self-destruction.

Mabel presented another specimen to Mr. Fleming, remarking that it had not the same number of rays as the others.

"No; but it is the more remarkable from that circumstance," said he, "as it shows you how these animals when mutilated can reproduce their rays or arms. Look closely, and you may perceive that a young arm is beginning

to sprout in the place where the original one was inserted. This large one," continued Mr. Fleming, as he minutely examined the mutilated specimen, "has a small purple urchin now in its stomach, on which it has been feeding. You could not easily guess that this humble-looking creature is among the most voracious and destructive animals of the deep. No shell-fish can escape its fate when once seized; and so well known has its character always been that there was formerly an act of parliament enjoining every one engaged in oyster-fishing to destroy, and even to trample under foot, the fish commonly called the 'five-finger,' and described there as 'resembling the rowel of a spur,' because, says the act, it sucks out the oysters when they gape out of their shells."

"I have actually seen an instance of its ferocious disposition," said Miss Vincent. "Long ago I amused myself in collecting some of the small fish that I found on the shore, and I had put several into a basin of sea-water; among others were a large starfish and a young plaice—an infant, I may say, for it was not more than an inch and a half in length. It was whirling merrily round and round in the water, when suddenly, to my astonishment, I saw the starfish raise up one arm and strike the poor little merry plaice just on the back of the neck. The blow was fatal: it turned instantly on its back, and sank to the bottom of the basin."

"Ah, the poor little plaice!" exclaimed Evelyn; "but how extraordinary that the starfish should be so wantonly mischievous! it looks so inert, and so helpless. But pray look here: in this little rocky pool there is one of them fastened by the end of one of its rays—oh! do look, how it dangles itself about!—and see, Mr. Fleming, here is another that seems to be gliding down the side of the rock—how does it move?"

"This insignificant little animal," he replied, "which looks so helpless, as you say, is a remarkable instance of the provisions of nature for the preservation of life, and also of the mechanism of motion in animals. In the first place, observe the covering on its back. This knobbed coat of mail, as it may be called, effectually preserves the creature from injury when dashed by the waves among the rocks.

You see it extends round the sides, to the under surface of each ray, and that "——

"Yes, I see that," said Evelyn, interrupting him; "but it seems as if there was a little groove at the under side."

"That is what I was going to point out to you; and, moreover, that in each groove are lodged the feet of the animal, hundreds of which are protruded when it moves, each in turn fixing itself to the side of the rock—for every foot is a sucker, acting in the same way as the feet of the common house-fly. While some are alternately fixing and detaching themselves, others hold firmly, and the star-fish moves along as you observed with a gliding motion, climbing carefully and securely this slippery perpendicular rock."

"How very beautiful," Mrs. Manvers remarked, "must be the mechanism of those feet! they are, in fact, minute air-pumps."

"Yes," replied Mr. Fleming, "and the mechanism of those air-pumps is as simple as it is beautiful. Each foot projects through one of the small openings that you see on the under surface of the ray; and each consists of a tube closed at the outer end, while the other end, within the ray, expands into a bag containing a small quantity of fluid. When the feet are exposed to injury from the dashing of the waves against any hard substance, they are all contracted close in to their orifices, and the whole of the fluid has receded into the several bags attached to them; but when he moves again, the fluid is impelled from each of the bags into their respective feet, which then project beyond the orifices, and become so many rigid legs, as in this one that you see moving, till the animal again retracts them by withdrawing the fluid within the bag."

"But where does the fluid come from whenever it is wanted?" Evelyn inquired.

"From a reservoir in the centre of the body, connected by a pipe with each foot."

"Why, Mr. Fleming, there is as much admirable contrivance for the motion of this little starfish as there need be for the strides of an elephant!" exclaimed Evelyn. "But, indeed, in the delicate formation of the smallest insect, the same wonderful wisdom is displayed."

"But I have not done yet," he replied, smiling at the delight in Evelyn's countenance: "I have not described how those feet are applied in order to climb a perpendicular surface. You may perceive that the closed extremity of each foot is cup-shaped, so that, when applied to any surface and the fluid partly withdrawn, a vacuum is formed beneath it, and thus each foot becomes a sucker, by which the animal is not only enabled to climb the smoothest surface but to hold its prey; for when the force of all these suckers is exerted its grasp is prodigious. It would be difficult to conceive any mechanism more simple in construction, or more perfect for its purposes: and thus you see this apparently insignificant creature is fitted to be one of the most destructive inhabitants of the sea: bending its flexible rays round any shell-fish on which it seizes, these numerous little suckers hold the victim so firmly that escape is impossible."

While the party sauntered about the Urchin Cove or sat on the rocks, various subjects of conversation and of inquiry arose: among others, Miss Vincent asked if Mr. Fleming was acquainted with the dye that the people living near the coast extract from the common periwinkle, which is so abundant on the rocks?

"Yes," he answered, "but that limpet is found in many parts of Ireland. There are other species, too, of that numerous family which may be used in dyeing—the purpura, for instance, which produces a beautiful and permanent purple, supposed by some naturalists to be the same as the Tyrian. On the coast of Donegal I have myself often seen the women in the act of collecting the colour. They pierce the shell in one spot, and the purple liquid instantly flows out."

"That is just the same method that is followed here," said Miss Vincent, "but I wish it could be managed with less cruelty to the animal. That purple never changes even when boiled: but there is another little limpet here with a yellow shell, though not common, which produces a bright red dye."

"That limpet, with its little yellow shell and red dye, is new to me," said Mr. Fleming, pointing to one; "but I have seen, on another part of this western coast, a species which yields a variety of colours. The fluid as it first appears, upon

the shell being pierced, is green ; but if exposed to the heat of the sun, it becomes red ; and when boiled, it is quite black."

"What a number of curious facts people may learn when they pursue any one subject of inquiry, and how much more when they have books or friends to assist them !" Evelyn remarked.

"Say, rather, when they have the habit of observation," replied Mr. Fleming, "and have energy to prompt them to research. I heard lately a remarkable instance of the effect of such energy, and of the knowledge which may be acquired without the aid of books or society. Mr. Sars—a clergyman, who lives literally in the high north, at Florø, in latitude 66°, and is almost entirely cut off from intercourse with the learned world, and out of the reach of any zoological books—by his indefatigable zeal has made himself acquainted with several classes of the inhabitants of the sea, many of which he has accurately figured and described. The greater portion of his observations are really quite new, and his descriptions judicious."

"What an admirable example of perseverance against fortune !" said Miss Vincent.

Mr. Vincent, accompanied by Mrs. Desmond and some more of his guests, now joined the urchin-hunters, and, observing that the tide was rapidly coming in, advised them to leave the sands and follow him to a point from whence they might have an extensive view of the ocean. As they were slowly making their way up the steep ascent, they perceived, on the highest pinnacle of the cliff, a great sea-eagle—that magnificent bird, which is so daring that it frequently attacks the men who gain their livelihood by bird-catching among the rocks ; for it builds its nest there, and will fight hard in its defence. "You have probably heard," said he, "of the wonderful adventure, some years ago, of one of those bird-catchers, who had an encounter with an eagle ; it was among these rocks that it occurred."

"Oh, how charming it will be to hear it on the very spot where it happened !" said Gerald : "Mabel, do come and listen to a real adventure."

"The man had been let down by a rope from the top of

yonder overhanging rock," said Mr. Vincent, "when an eagle, darting out from a cleft, made a furious assault upon him. He instantly seized his knife and defended himself, though he had only one hand at liberty. The assailant, enraged by his wounds, became more fierce and desperate in his attack; and the man, seeing the necessity of still more vigorous efforts, at last gave a successful blow at the bird. But, unfortunately, the same blow that freed him from his enemy nearly severed the rope on which his safety depended. He endeavoured to grasp it above the part that was cut; and, happily, his comrades at the top of the cliff, perceiving his situation, began slowly, and with the greatest caution, to draw him up. You may well imagine that their anxiety was almost equal to that of the poor fellow himself—the rope stretching and cracking, and in continual danger of being rubbed against the sharp edges of the rocks: his life now depended on a single strand of the rope, for, being no longer able to ward it off, the other two strands had gradually worn away, and just as he was within an inch of the summit of the cliff it snapped—and—"

"Oh, do not tell the rest!" cried Evelyn, putting her hand over her eyes; "I think I see it all. How dreadful!"

"No—you do not quite see it all yet, my young friend, for one of the men had seized him by the clothes before that last strand broke, and, with a firm grasp, drew him up in safety over the brink of the precipice. During the danger and suspense there had been a breathless silence; but now his companions gave a loud and triumphant shout; the poor man, however, was quite overcome, and continued insensible for such a length of time that they thought he was dead."

The whole party had sat down on the rocks while listening to this interesting anecdote, Mr. Fleming anxiously watching the wheeling movements of the numerous birds which were disturbed by their voices, and the young people rather inclined to start at the near approach of every large bird, and at every flap of their wings half afraid of an attack from the terrific sea-eagle, so deep was the impression left on their minds by the circumstance Mr. Vincent had related. In some time, however, their attention was attracted by a variety of

fishing-smacks flitting about with their swelling sails, but appearing almost unmanageable when they tried to approach the shore—struggling, as it seemed, against the opposing wind; while they observed also some very little boats, each containing two men, pursuing their course, heedless of the rising and sinking of the billows, and managed with apparent ease.

“Those little boats,” said Mr. Vincent, “are a remarkable instance of the permanence of customs. From time immemorial you find, in both ancient and modern accounts of Ireland, a description of the corrie—a small skiff made of skins and wicker-work. Even before the Christian era Eochaidh, an Irish prince, who had seized on the crown of Ulster, in order to convey his soldiers by water, and thus to have the power of making sudden incursions along the coast, provided a great number of these cribs or large baskets, made of wattles and covered with hides, in which his followers could fearlessly navigate amongst rocks and shoals in the most tempestuous weather.”

“Corrieles of that kind are quite classical,” said Mr. Desmond. “We are told by Cæsar that he used them in carrying his troops over the rivers in Spain.”

“And they are still in use in this country!” said Evelyn. “What are they called here?”

“They are called *curracks*,” Mr. Vincent replied, “and I have often been astonished at seeing the rough weather in which people run a long way from shore in such frail craft; but they are so light and pliable that they escape, and are borne safely along a boiling sea, when other boats would be dashed in pieces against the rocks. They are still used in many parts of the coast of Ireland, but particularly on this western coast.”

“I remember reading of skin boats in Captain Lyons’ entertaining voyage,” said Mabel: “the Esquimaux used them constantly; the women had small ones for themselves, but those used by the men were so large as to contain several people.”

Mr. Desmond observed that the same contrivance is found in various regions. “For instance, in Upper Egypt there are corrieles of wicker-work covered with hides; just such as

were made by the ancient Britons. You may recollect these lines—

‘ The bending willows into bark they twine,
Then line the work with skins of slaughter’d kine.’

Some writers think it probable that it was in one of these wicker boats that Moses was exposed by his mother, as we are told in the 11th chapter of Exodus. The word translated ‘bulrush’ signifies a species of papyrus, which the Egyptians used for their rafts and corricles. Similar boats are to this day employed on the Tigris and the Indus; and I have read that on the still more remote Sutlej they have a most singular ferry-boat: they inflate the skin of the hind-leg of an ox, dress the inside with the tar of the deodar pine, and tan the outside by an infusion of pomegranate-husks.”

Mr. Fleming asked how that could be made to answer as a boat?

“A double cord,” replied Mr. Desmond, “is fastened round the inflated skin, across which the waterman places himself; he holds the cord with one hand, while with the other he manages a short paddle, and at the same time assists his movements with his feet.”

“But how does he carry the passengers?”

“The passenger,” replied Mr. Desmond, “sits astride on the ferryman’s back with as much baggage on his own back as he can carry, his knees bent and resting on the inflated skin.”

“What a laughable sight!” exclaimed Gerald.

“Extraordinary, at least,” said his father; “but imagine how much more astonished you would be if you saw heavy and even bulky luggage transported across the river by the same mode of conveyance. In this case, two of the skins are brought close together; the ferryman of each locks his leg round that of the other, and by a frame laid across the two skins an excellent raft is made upon which the goods are placed.”

“What an effect habit has on our powers and on our feelings also!” said Mr. Vincent. “Were we out in these little skin-boats, dashed up and down with the waves, how uncomfortable we should be! Yet those fine fellows who are rowing their light curracks in the wind seem insensible to it.”

"Yes," said Mrs. Desmond. "How particularly the force of habit is shown by the courage of those bird-catchers of whom you were speaking some minutes since! What dangers they undergo!"

The conversation then turned on the various sea-birds frequenting that coast, and Mr. Vincent, among many which he named, mentioned the bernicle-goose.

"The barnacle-goose!" exclaimed Gerald. "Why, I thought you said that was a silly story about a bird being produced from those shells that we saw yesterday."

"I did; and now repeat that it is," Mr. Fleming replied. "But, my little friend, the name is spelled differently in the first place. The bird I now mention is a real species of goose, and, moreover, is the very kind in regard to which that foolish error prevailed."

"Have you the sea-bernicle here?"

"Rarely," replied Mr. Vincent; "but on the more northern coasts, particularly on that of Mayo, I can, from my own observations, say they are abundant; for, when on a visit to a friend there a few years ago, I saw great flights of those birds, and heard too the curious sounds they make. I was roused one night by a singular noise, faint at first, but rapidly increasing in loudness as it seemed to pass over my head. The sounds were wild and musical, and much varied in tone, till, becoming more remote and indistinct, they at length died away. I discovered at length that the noise was made by a flight, or, to speak more correctly, a *flash* of sea-bernicles which nightly passed over the house in crossing from one estuary to the other. Afterwards I saw the sand covered with them to a considerable extent."

"I should like to know each bird by its note," said Evelyn.

"Constant attention would soon enable you to do so, for the peculiar note of each tribe is easily distinguished," said Mr. Vincent, "particularly that of the wild swan, which is very musical. The peculiar flight which distinguishes birds is also worth observing."

Many other birds were discussed as the party walked home. The day had been one of much interest to all; the evening had its own pleasures too, for it was chiefly devoted to music.

Evelyn performed very much to the satisfaction of her father, who had not before been present when she sang among those who were not her intimates. He was pleased to see that she was obliging, willing to contribute to the amusement of others, and without either forwardness or making any disqualifying speeches, whether the result of pride or modesty; well bred, in short.

On the following day the Desmond party took leave of the kind and hospitable Vincents. They separated with mutual regret and promises of future intimacy. Mr. Desmond, on parting with Mr. Fleming, warmly pressed him to visit Clonallen after he had made his tour in Kerry.

During the drive home to Cromdarragh Castle the various pleasures our party had enjoyed in the three days spent at The Cliffs and their various adventures were discussed, and all agreed with Gerald, who warmly declared that "the visit was as pleasant, because it was all real, as that delightful book that he loved so much, 'A Visit to the Sea-Side.'"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The Test of Principle — The Jodh Moran, or the Collar of Irish Judges
— School-house completed — Artificers' Bills — No Money — Evelyn's
Self-examination.

EVELYN'S mind had been so much occupied by all the interesting things she had seen and heard while at The Cliffs that she had scarcely once thought of home, or of her various plans and works going on there. She felt surprised when she returned at finding that her mind could have been so completely withdrawn from her school and garden and plantations, and all her accustomed pursuits.

"I do not know how it is," said she to her father; "but while I was at The Cliffs I never thought of my castle nor of my different improvements; nor indeed of myself."

"That shows," replied he, "the advantage of mixing with good society. We learn to doubt our self-importance; for we find that there are others as cultivated and as useful as ourselves, perhaps more so; and we perceive that our real influence and importance must depend on our own steadiness in fulfilling our various duties towards others and towards ourselves—on our acting, in a word, not from wavering and uncertain fancy, nor in mere imitation of others, but from principle."

"But by what standard is that principle to be established?" said Evelyn. "How are we to ascertain that what we call our principle is right? for each person's conscience will vary according to their opinions, and, though forming different views, each will think they are right."

"My dear daughter, there is one only test by which we can try the correctness of the principles on which we act—the Gospel. The pure and unselfish morality laid down in the Gospel is an unerring guide, and ought to be the groundwork

of our judgment when we want to analyse the soundness of our opinions, for, unquestionably, none can be correct that are in opposition to that."

"But, papa, in the laws of our country, to which, of course, we must all submit, is there much reference to the Gospel?"

"The laws of this or of any other country, my dear, must relate to and provide for many circumstances to which no special allusion is made in the Gospel; and those laws, being made by man, probably partake too much of our infirmities and passions; but you find the principles on which they were established fully sanctioned by the Gospel. The simplicity, wisdom, and majesty of our Saviour's reply to the Pharisees, 'Render unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's,' appears to me to be altogether divine, and solemnly shows the duty of our obedience, while it does not in any degree lessen the responsibility of the lawmakers. But I think you can scarcely find any one law in direct opposition to the simple golden rule of acting towards others as we wish them to act towards us."

"But are there not some cases, papa, where that rule, although influencing our motives, might not be sufficient to guide us?"

"Very likely; but such cases very seldom occur. In private life, whether obeying the law or the Gospel, deliberate before you act; examine with sincerity your motives, apply to them the test of your conscience, and, when you have satisfied the truth-telling monitor in your bosom that your decisions are right, then persevere. The constant habit of consulting that monitor within us is most useful, and, if you do so with undissembling candour, you will find its influence become daily more and more constant and efficacious."

"Do you recollect the story of Amurath, papa? Grand-papa told it to me when I was a child. Oh! how often I used then to wish for the ring which pressed his finger when he did anything wrong—how useful it would be in any doubtful case!"

"Yes, if you could be in doubt where you have such tests to consult as those of which we have just spoken; but there is a corresponding circumstance mentioned in that little

History of Ireland * that I showed you this morning. The collar worn by Irish judges in the early ages is said to have given warning by increased pressure round the neck of the wearer whenever he was about to pronounce an unjust sentence; and though that is only a pretty fable, the judges did certainly wear a peculiar collar. That peculiar collar was called the *Jodh Moran*."

"Why had it that odd name?"

"The history tells us," replied her father, "that Moran, after whom it was named, was son of Carbery, who had usurped the crown of a neighbouring kingdom. On the death of his father, Moran nobly restored it to the son of the monarch from whom Carbery had wrested it, and contented himself with the office of chief justice."

"How generous!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"His conduct was the effect of *principle*," said Mr. Desmond, "and he was therefore consistent, whatever situation he filled. It was in consequence of the satisfaction he gave by his upright decisions, and the fame acquired by his wisdom, that the collar worn by the Irish judges was from his time called Moran's Collar, or Jodh Moran."

"What a pretty anecdote!" said Evelyn; "I should like to read the book in which you found it; I ought to know more of Irish history."

"Indeed," said Mr. Desmond, "people here are wonderfully ignorant of the history of their own country, and too easily deterred from reading it by the idea of its containing nothing but perpetual wars and rebellions."

"That monitor which you just now advised me to consult," said Evelyn, "tells me that we ought to be out this very fine morning. Will you come to the school, papa? I am sure my mother and all will like to come with us; I will ask them."

Evelyn's proposal was willingly agreed to, particularly by Mabel and Gerald: it was gratifying to Mrs. Desmond to see Mabel and Evelyn take a mutual interest in the same objects.

They found the school-house completely finished; air and fires were now all that was necessary to dry and make it habitable; and Evelyn, as she looked at it, felt that self-

* History of Ireland for Schools and Families, by Miss Brabazon.

satisfaction which is so natural when we see the success of our exertions.

"How rejoiced I am to see it all finished at last and looking very well!" Evelyn exclaimed with some little triumph: "and it was all my own plan, too! Now the next step will be to settle the schoolmistress in it, and 'open school,' as people say in their advertisements, as soon as possible."

"As soon as *possible* is a very good expression to use on this occasion," said Mrs. Desmond; "for, however anxious you are to have the house occupied, and to see the success of your good intentions, it will not for some time be habitable—till the plaster is really dry."

"But I hope that the air and constant fires will soon have that effect: surely in a few days it will be all ready; I shall be much disappointed and vexed indeed if my school is not soon established."

"I should be sorry to be the victim you first put to live there," said her father drily, "since you are so impatient to have it inhabited; but in the mean time, Evelyn, I should like to know, now that you have the rest of the bills, what this house has cost you altogether?"

Evelyn coloured, hesitated, was silent for a minute, and then said in a low voice, "I have not yet paid for all; and I have no idea what the amount will be."

"But you have at least paid all those bills we lately examined?"

"No, papa, I am sorry to say I could not; I have only paid a part of them."

"Oh, Evelyn! how is that? you did not tell me at that time that you could not pay them: that was uncandid; though I am sure you did not intentionally deceive me. Besides, I thought you were resolved to build the school with the money you had in your hands when you began it?"

"I deceived myself," said she, looking abashed; "but indeed I never meant to deceive you, papa. I had several expenses of other kinds which I had not foreseen—extra workmen in the farm and garden; and then—indeed I do not know how it was, but I—and so, from one thing to another, my money slipped away, and I had not enough to pay more

than a part of the bills you saw ; and now I have more bills, but have not looked at them yet ; there is no use in looking at them till I can pay them."

"You are unwise, however, not to ascertain the amount."

"I will, before November, which fortunately is not very far off."

"Fortunately for you, perhaps ; but it is a long time for those poor artificers to wait, who naturally expected immediate payment from the owner of this fine mansion."

"I am very sorry for them," said Evelyn, "but I can do nothing more."

"That is generally the case," said he ; "few consider the injury to the poor tradespeople that is caused by delaying their payment, nor how much of the distress and misery of this country arises from that alone. And then you should also consider the injurious effect on your own mind : you become insensible to the distress you cause ; unpunctual in every way ; and uncandid—perhaps false—at least, not upright."

"I hope at least I shall never become deceitful ; but indeed I did not think those small sums could make much difference to the people who sent their bills."

"If paying those 'small sums,' the amount of which, however, you do not know, is inconvenient to you, just consider what a hardship it must be to those who earn their daily bread by their work not to receive their money when due. Justice, my dear Evelyn, must not be sacrificed to convenience, much less to our fancies. It is the first fruit of the golden rule of which we were speaking just now. Let us consider for a moment the effect of your delay in the payment of their bills, to persons in the situation of your mason, your plasterer, your carpenter, or your slater ; they are each of them attended by their hodmen, or labourers, or apprentices, whom in their turn they cannot pay, because they wait for your money, nor can they provide the necessaries of life for their wives and children, nor the implements requisite for their business ; how then are they to live or to support their families and those dependent on them ? By one way only ;

going on score with the little country shopkeeper, who always charges the highest price for goods purchased on credit—thus forced to buy at the highest rate, for want of that ready money you withhold from them, and which would not only enable them to obtain their goods at a fair market price, but also to procure a greater proportion of necessities or comforts for the sum received ; while, on the other hand, buying them at the highest rate, he is not only unable to procure absolute necessities, but he cannot pay his rent ; and by degrees he becomes so distressed, that no efforts can ”——

“ Oh ! stop, stop, for mercy sake, papa ! ” exclaimed Evelyn, bursting into tears ; “ I see how wrong, how blamable I have been ! ”

Mr. Desmond did stop, and willingly ; he had sown the seed at a right moment, and, he felt certain, in a good soil—he therefore wisely left it to germinate.

After a pause, which appeared painfully long to Mabel, who tenderly sympathised with her sister’s feelings, Evelyn pressed her father’s hand, and said, with brightening eyes,

“ I think that I understand now the mischief that irregular payment may cause ; I am determined not to be again guilty of that fault at least ; and, to make amends to each of those poor people, whom I feel that I have almost defrauded, I will pay double what I owe them.”

“ You will do then what will be injudicious towards them, unjust to yourself, and unfair to others ; you will lead them to expect the same double payment from all who do not immediately discharge their bills.”

“ But I meant it as a compensation to them, and as a punishment to myself.”

“ Punish yourself by curbing and restraining the silly eagerness for the gratification of your fancies—set an example of prudence and punctuality to your neighbours and to your workmen themselves—and when you do settle their accounts humble yourself by confessing to them that you are conscious of the impropriety of your conduct. Your proposed double payment to your artificer would be exactly the same error that many fine ladies commit, who overlook the exorbitant

charges of their milliners and tradespeople in order to obtain credit; and at last, having run up their bills to a dreadful amount, which they cannot pay, are forced to leave the country to escape from their creditors, having first caused the ruin, perhaps, of the people with whom they dealt. One individual may not, perhaps, cause irremediable ruin, but the same conduct—which is, alas! but too common—in many, must have at last that sad result.”

“But such serious effects must be caused by an extraordinary degree of extravagance, papa?”

“Yes, my dear child; but those who once go in debt can seldom stop; year after year the evil is increased, and, instead of the honest courage which enables us to forego the indulgence for which we cannot immediately pay, we become hardened to the shame of being in debt, and sink deeper and deeper into the gulf thus prepared for us by undue self-indulgence.”

As Mr. Desmond finished speaking they arrived at home. Evelyn speedily retired to her room; she felt mortified at all that had taken place, and her mind was painfully occupied by what her father had said, but a little calm reflection led her to a better state of feeling. She remembered how inconsiderately she had undertaken the school-house without calculating her ways and means; she repeated to herself all her father had said, feeling grateful that he had not spoken more severely, and with shame recollected with what disdain she had treated the advice of Mrs. Manvers and of the steward. She was vexed at the exposure of her follies before Mabel and Gerald, but a long self-conference softened her into humility, and she rose from the sofa with a cheerfulness that surprised her, and with firm resolutions to think before she acted, and to pay more deference to the advice of her friends.

While pondering on the state of her affairs she was interrupted by the arrival of a note from Lady Crowsdale expressing her wish to call on Mrs. Desmond while at Cromdarragh Castle, and proposing to come in the course of the next week to pay a long morning visit.

Evelyn took the note to her mother, saying—“I think

you will be glad to see them. Would it not be better to invite them to spend two or three days, so that you may really enjoy their company?"

But Mrs. Desmond advised her not to do anything at this moment that would unnecessarily increase her expenses; and Evelyn, by a good-humoured acquiescence with her mother's opinion, gave the first fruit of her good resolutions.



CHAPTER XLIX.

Prophetic Passages in Psalm xvi. — Applied by St. Peter and St. Paul —
Descent into Hades predicted—Closing Effusion.

THE next morning, being the Sabbath, Evelyn endeavoured to withdraw her mind from her late anxieties and vexations, so as to devote it, calm and unruffled, to the duties and sacred occupations of the day. It so happened that the sermon she heard at church was on the prophetic passages in the sixteenth Psalm, and therefore doubly interesting from its connexion with her own study of the prophecies.

In the afternoon she was carefully reading over that Psalm when Mrs. Manvers happened to come into her cabinet.

"I am glad you have come now," exclaimed Evelyn. "I have been reflecting on the sermon we heard to-day, and wished to talk with you about it; for though some parts of the sixteenth Psalm are applicable to our Saviour only, there are others less distinct, as they seem to me to refer simply to David."

"How so, my dear?"

"It appears to me that the prophetic views of the psalmist are sometimes mixed up with his present feelings; and, notwithstanding all that Mr. White said, I cannot help thinking that it is difficult to discriminate between them."

"You know, my dear," said Mrs. Manvers, "that in almost all the prophetic writings there is some degree of obscurity caused by the intermixture of the present circumstances immediately passing within the knowledge of the prophet along with those to take place hereafter, the shadows of which he is allowed, as it were, to behold in remote futurity."

"Besides," said Evelyn, "the title seems to show that David is the subject of it."

"Yes, at first sight; but I am assured that the Hebrew

title signifies 'an Epitaph on the Beloved.' The word David means beloved, and is used in the prophetic Scriptures in that sense unquestionably. This may be observed in Isaiah and elsewhere; and you may perceive," added Mrs. Manvers, "that the whole Psalm corresponds with this interpretation of its inscription. We find, too, as Mr. White said, that St. Peter, in Acts ii., applies this Psalm to our Lord, and considers it to refer both to his resurrection and his restoration to his former glory, implying that David did not speak concerning himself, but of the resurrection of Christ."

"The Psalm being so applied by St. Peter is certainly a proof not to be overlooked," said Evelyn.

"And St. Paul, in alluding to this very Psalm in Acts xiii., gives it the same explanation," continued Mrs. Manvers, "distinctly showing that David, having long since seen corruption in the grave, could not be the person indicated. In this, as in many other prophecies, the important predictions are clear, though some of the accompanying passages may be rather obscure to our contracted minds."

"Yes; and now that we have considered it together, I perceive the distinctness of the prediction better, and see that the Psalm should be understood as referring to our Lord only. Thank you for making it clear to me, dear Mrs. Manvers."

"You may further observe that the prophet represents our Lord as preparing them for that tremendous conflict which He was to undergo for us. His views, directed triumphantly to its glorious termination, were of a higher and different nature from what David's feelings could have been, and therefore inapplicable in every respect to any of the events of David's life."

"I was inconsiderate," said Evelyn, "in the opinion I formed of this Psalm; but you take a wider and more exalted view of it. What an advantage it is to be so thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures as you are, and able to make one part interpret another!"

"That is the process of our best commentators," replied Mrs. Manvers; "but they are assisted not only by the erudition derived from the studies of their predecessors, but also by an intrinsic knowledge of the original languages of

the Scriptures. Much, however, is in the power of unlearned people like you and me; and I think you cannot do better than read, now while the subject is fresh in your mind, the second and thirteenth chapters of Acts and part of the first of Hebrews, which all satisfactorily prove that the Messiah is the subject of this Psalm; for the manner in which it is alluded to and quoted shows at once the subject and fulfilment of the prophecy."

"Thank you, Mrs. Manvers; I will study them attentively: but tell me first, who are meant by 'the saints that are in the earth' in whom was his delight."

"His chosen disciples, whom he condescended to call his 'friends' and 'brethren.' Recollect his tender consolations to them, and his pathetic prayer for their support and guidance in the arduous office they were going to undertake. And besides those favoured men who had the privilege of being our Lord's companions, we may feel certain that by the 'excellent' are meant all sincere and pious Christians throughout all ages."

"The fifth and sixth verses I think might apply to David," said Evelyn.

"No; most of our commentators understand them to express the Messiah's anticipations of the glorious extension of his kingdom throughout the earth, on his second coming in triumph."

"How is 'my glory rejoiceth,' verse 9, explained?"

"It is thought," replied Mrs. Manvers, "to allude to his second and triumphant coming. But it is to be observed that the Septuagint substitutes tongue for glory: the same Hebrew term, having elsewhere that sense, may be so applied here, because the tongue is the instrument by which we praise and glorify God—language being the privilege of the human race. I think that in this, as in most cases, the simplest meaning is the best."

"Oh! yes, certainly," said Evelyn; "but at the same time it is useful to know the various explanations; they give an additional motive for research."

"Very true; but we may derive more real, more spiritual benefit, from the contemplation of our Saviour's sufferings for

us, both to strengthen us by his example in submitting with pious resignation and cheerfulness to our trials, and also to teach us humility and benevolence."

"In verse 11 our Lord seems to address himself to the Father, in the certainty of rising again from the dead."

"Yes," said Mrs. Manvers; "it does appear to be a prediction of his descent into Hades, the place where the souls of the departed rest—to such humiliation did Jesus stoop for all mankind; and then of his triumphant resurrection, by which He has overcome eternal death and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. The Psalmist here closes his prediction by an address to the Lord of All, an effusion resulting naturally from his conviction of the Redeemer's glorious ascent to heaven, and one in which all truly Christian hearts will join—'Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.'"

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CHAPTER L.

Visit from Lady Crowsdale — Guayana — Native Huts — Thunder-Storm — Bush Rope Vine — Victoria Regia — Amazons — Fallacies of History — Traditions.

IN order to spend a long morning, Lady Crowsdale, accompanied by her son and daughters, arrived before one. She had not met Mr. Desmond for some years, and her children had never seen him ; but his manners were so amiable and so free from all formality, and Mrs. Desmond was so gentle and engaging, that the young people felt quite at ease with them.

The morning passed away rapidly and agreeably, sometimes in general conversation, while at others the party separated into different groups.

Mr. Crowsdale, perceiving that Mr. Desmond was interested about Guayana, amused him with a few of his adventures among the various tribes of natives which he had visited ; some of whom were so much surprised at the sight of his fire-arms, that they fled from the travellers, and could not be induced to return. In reply to a question of Mrs. Desmond's, he said,—

“ We found many striking differences in the manners and customs, and even the language, of the principal tribes, though spread over the same country, and frequently intermixing. They vary remarkably in the form of their huts ; those of the Macusi tribe are dome-shaped and thatched with palm-leaves, while that of the Warrow is a shed open all round, and the Caribbee has an oval hut thatched down to the ground. But in all of them the roof is supported by a beam from which their hammocks are suspended ; and these hammocks serve both as chair and bed. Among another tribe, called Maossity, we saw some houses of a very singular construction, of uncommon size, and covered in by two roofs one above the other ;

the smoke finding an outlet between them. These people are peculiar in their appearance ; they have very marked features, and wear their hair in queues of ten or twelve inches in length, tied by a palm-leaf, and ornamented with parrots' feathers and strings of red cotton. But they are so miserably poor that they grind rotten wood along with the cassava-flour, to increase the quantity of their bread."

Mr. Desmond asked him if he had observed much difference of character among those various tribes.

" Yes," he replied. " Some are bold, ingenuous, and intelligent, while others are dull and singularly timid. The Purigotos, for example, fled as our boats approached them, leaving at our mercy their dwellings, where we found their bread half baked, and even their weapons, so much valued by all Indians. The guides that we had taken with us had such a desire for them, that it was with difficulty we could preserve them while we waited for the return of the owners in the hope of restoring their property."

" I suppose you did not stop there however very long ?" said Mr. Desmond.

" Longer than we wished, for we could not proceed, though anxious to do so, unless the natives were friendly ; we, therefore, from time to time, sent some of our Indians in search of the fugitives, in order to assure them of our peaceable disposition. At last, after a delay of several days, our scouts fell in with a family belonging to another tribe, and we persuaded them to go on an embassy for us to the fugitive Purigotos with numerous presents, to calm their apprehensions."

" And when you had pacified those poor creatures, did you return the way you had come, or did you still push on ?"

" We pursued our course northward, until, the river being no longer navigable, we were obliged to abandon our canoes, or wood-skins, as the bark canoes were called ; and as the few faithful Macusies still with us could not carry all our baggage, I was forced, as well as my friend S——, to leave a great part of our collections behind, though much fearing that we should never recover the things we had taken so much pains to collect. After many fatiguing days of climbing hills and wading through swamps, we arrived at a settlement of friendly

Indians; and you may well imagine the joy our little party felt at again receiving a hospitable welcome. The chief even sent for the baggage we had deserted, and I recovered the greatest part of my treasures."

"Pray show me your route on the map, that I may trace your course; though our knowledge of the geography of those regions is so limited that I suppose we shall scarcely find any of the places you mention marked in our old atlas."

Sir Connor had formerly made an excellent collection of maps and charts. The proper volume was speedily produced, but, as Mr. Desmond had foreseen, the maps of South America showed only a few places on the coast. Mr. Crowsdale, however, with the help of a pair of compasses and a ruler, inserted in one of them a very intelligible sketch of his perambulations; and his mode of laying off his positions by the scale and compass, or by the degrees of latitude and longitude, were not lost on the quick eyes of either Evelyn or Mabel. Pointing out the river Corentyn on the map, Mr. Crowsdale described his voyage, which was attended with many dangers, distresses, and scarcity of provisions, expressing the deep gratitude he had felt when at last they arrived at a Carib settlement where they were known. He then marked upon the map the whole circuit of their expedition, by which they had traversed that extensive colony, and explored the course of the three great rivers, the Berbice, Essequibo, and Corentyn.

"What a happy time it must have been," said Gerald, who had listened with the most fixed attention while Mr. Crowsdale was thus employed, "wandering about those strange countries, and every day meeting with new adventures!"

"More agreeable, perhaps, when retraced in memory than they appeared at the time," said Mrs. Manvers.

"Yes, indeed!" said Mr. Crowsdale; "the enjoyment of such a life of adventure is much diminished by anxiety, and by the languor which follows over-exertion and want of food. The suspense one feels while boating on rivers never before navigated, and passing for successive days through boundless forests where there is no trace of man, perfectly uninhabited except by wild beasts, is not a little wearing to the most hardy and courageous persons; and though my admiration was great of

the tropical scenery, yet the impression is more strong than pleasing. For instance, in the midst of one of those desolate forests a tremendous thunder-storm occurred. The mingled uproar of wind, forest, and water was so great, that the noise of the thunder reverberating among the mountains was almost drowned; it was a magnificent but truly awful scene."

"The impression of which will probably never fade from your memory," said Mrs. Desmond.

"Oh, never!" replied he; "its terrific grandeur, in contrast with the sense I had of my own helpless insignificance, is indelibly written there."

"You seem to have passed through a portion of the country formerly visited by Sir Walter Raleigh—his El Dorado."

"Yes, Mrs. Manvers, and I well remember one magnificent cataract, where the ledges of rock were richly studded with yellowish mica, and shone so brightly in the sun, that S—— and I exclaimed at the same moment, 'This is the very spot which led the unfortunate Raleigh to assert that in this country every rock was gold.'"

"But to compensate for poor Raleigh's geological fictions," said Mr. Desmond, "what a treat you and your botanical friend must have had in the variety of new plants that you probably observed in those untracked regions!"

"Yes, a vast number indeed," replied Mr. Crowsdale; "and some as interesting for the uses made of them by the Indians, as for their mere novelty to the botanist. There was one called *parica* in that country, a species of *mimosa*; it produces a bean which the natives pound into dust; sometimes they put the powder into the nose and ears, at other times they inhale its smoke. The effect of either is a state of intoxication which lasts some hours, and deprives them of all self-command. But the most remarkable was the *Ita* palm, which, in consequence of its various uses, has been named by some people the tree of life: it serves for many household purposes, and grows in a region 4000 feet above the level of the sea."

"Oh, I recollect," said Evelyn; "you mentioned some of them to us when you described the tree at Ardescar."

"We also saw many flowering plants that were equally re-

markable for their beauty as the palms were for their grandeur. One was a *liane*, or twining plant—the bush-rope vine as it is called by the colonists; and it well deserves the name, the stem is so twisted. It bears large bunches of white flowers, one petal of each being spotted with pink, and their smell is delightful. But none surpassed the *Victoria regia*, a drawing of which you may recollect having seen at Ardeskar. It grows only in still water. The magnificent blossom is pure white when it opens in the morning, with a dash of pink in the centre, but as the day advances a crimson hue is diffused over the whole flower, and it becomes powerfully fragrant. Its diameter is 13 inches including the large calyx with its red and green sepals. The gigantic leaves are nearly 6 feet in length, and as they float upon the water support numbers of sultana-hens, spurwings, and other water-fowls, searching for insects or nibbling their edges.”

“How charming!” said Evelyn: “I am afraid it outdoes in splendour the beautiful white water-lily, which grows in such profusion in our own lakes.”

“It may be more magnificent,” said Mrs. Manvers, “but cannot look more pure and elegant.”

“The *Nymphaea alba* is like a fair and delicate nymph,” said Mr. Desmond: “though in the early morning our

Water-lily to the light
Her chalice rears of silver bright,

she is said to close her flower and withdraw from the gaze of the multitude at four o'clock in the afternoon; but your *Victoria regia* may be said to be the representation of full-blown majesty.”

“Oh! Mr. Desmond, if you could see, as we have seen, the river Berbice gliding calm and unruffled in the midst of unfrequented forests and silent savannahs, with its myriads of magnificent Victorias, flourishing on its tranquil banks, after we had ascended above fifty rapids, you would never accuse it of courting admiration by a gaudy display of its beauties,” said Mr. Crowsdale. “But I confess to a little partiality for that glorious plant, which was first brought to Europe by my friend S——.”

"Indeed I can heartily sympathise with you in that and in his other discoveries, all of which must be interesting not only to the florist, but to the philosopher, who studies the several departments of nature, from the humble weed up to the varying tribes of the human species."

"And among those tribes I should like to learn," said Mrs. Desmond, "what traces you found of the Amazons; you know you were in the region where it is said those warlike damsels dwelt?"

"You will be sadly disappointed then, for we failed in finding the smallest foundation for the truth of that singular tradition, which tells us that Orellana, when landing at the mouth of the river Cumuriz (the present Trombetas), observed women fighting regularly in the ranks of the Indians who gave him battle; and as neither Brazilians nor Europeans had ever ascended that river, the abode of the nation of female warriors was assumed to be near its sources. But as we, who attained that mysterious spot, found no vestiges of those 'warlike ladies,' I am afraid we must relinquish all hope of realizing these fables, which hitherto have never been wholly believed or denied."

"It is remarkable," said Mr. Desmond, "that, as in the most remote times Amazons were supposed to exist in the old world, the first discoverers of South America should have borrowed that fable to enhance the wonders they detailed. But there is a far more interesting question to resolve—when, and how, that great western continent was first peopled. Have you made any observations with regard to that difficult subject?"

"It was not among the wild barbarians whom we visited that any such information could be obtained. Since my return home I have read much on the subject, but to form a just opinion would require a very extensive knowledge of the language, customs, and religion of the several tribes which flourished at the time that the invasion of the Spaniards and Portuguese interrupted their progress in civilization, overturned their government, and destroyed their archives."

"I suppose," said Mrs. Manvers, "that in every country some traditions may be found among the more intelligent of

the natives respecting their descent, and that if we understood their language we could ascertain something of their history."

"I fear," said Mr. Desmond, "that the time for gaining such knowledge has passed away. Memorials which might have supplied the substance of history have not been discovered, and we know but little certain of those people beyond the time at which they were conquered by the European invaders. I believe they had no written records, and the long hieroglyphic inscriptions which are still extant upon the Mexican temples we cannot yet decipher."

"I think we have no great loss," said Lady Crowsdale, "of their records. So little dependence can be placed on any historical details, that I always feel it to be a waste of time to read history, even that of much more civilized nations, except as one may read a fairy-tale; for I confess that there is nothing more amusing, or that leads me on with more interest, than a well-written history."

"But why then are you so much disposed to doubt its truth?" said Mrs. Desmond.

"Historians, even our own contemporary historians, give such opposite accounts of the events of yesterday," Lady Crowsdale answered, "that we, who know those circumstances accurately, and see how they are distorted, notwithstanding the publicity that is now given to every transaction, must feel that the long and minute narratives in ancient history, which pretend to give the very speeches of their heroes, and even their motives, must be almost fiction."

"My dear Madam," said Mr. Desmond, "you make a very sweeping conclusion there. You except, I take for granted, the records of the Bible?"

"Oh, yes, certainly," replied she. "Assuredly I do not mean to imply any doubt of their authenticity."

"In that book then," said Mr. Desmond, "we find many circumstances in the history of other nations besides the Jews, so mentioned that they form points of certainty, and serve as standard documents not to be doubted. From those fixed points we may safely venture into profane history: by comparing different accounts, scrutinizing the dates, and allowing for the motives of the writers, we shall often succeed in our

endeavours to unravel the truth, and our labours will be rewarded by the confirmation they afford to many of the details that might otherwise have appeared doubtful. Indeed, I think I may say that almost all the important facts of ancient history have by these means been satisfactorily confirmed."

"And a very interesting pursuit it is," said Mrs. Manvers, "to endeavour to work out the truth by first collecting the points where different historians agree, so as to form a series of landmarks by which to steer; and then trying to reconcile with them the allusions and the minor details that are incidentally found in contemporary writers, and even by the traditions which modern travellers collect."

"Rather laborious work, I should think," Miss Crowsdale observed, "and, after all, not very satisfactory; for how can we feel certain that we have completely discovered the true course of events where there is so much obscurity?"

"It often happens," said Mr. Desmond, "that one circumstance is unexpectedly confirmed by details relative to another, and that in our researches we acquire unexpected knowledge; our minds are thus enlarged as we advance, and we become so much interested in the pursuit of truth as to be unmindful of the labour."

"But," Lady Crowsdale remarked, "you mentioned the discoveries of modern travellers as useful in confirming historical records by the traditions they bring to light and the remnants of antiquity they describe. How can we place the smallest reliance on such vague things as traditions which we obtain only through the minstrel's ballad or the nurse's tale?"

"It seems to me a great mistake," replied Mr. Desmond, "to reject traditions, because they are often, indeed always, intermixed with fable; the probability is, that their remote foundation must have been real, however disguised by fiction or disfigured by confusing them with each other; and it is the special business of the impartial historian to separate the facts from the falsehoods. I will mention two circumstances to illustrate what I have been urging."

"I shall be glad to hear them," said Lady Crowsdale, "for I assure you I am not so prejudiced as not to listen willingly to good arguments against my own perhaps hasty opinions."

"One is," resumed Mr. Desmond, "that some of our travellers were so fortunate, a few years ago, as to collect in Bokhara (the ancient Bactria) several antique coins, which not only confirm the history of that ancient state, but by their means a series of Bactrian kings has been distinctly made out, and a gap in history has been filled. The other fact to which I referred relates to Egypt. Herodotus, whom it has been too much the custom to doubt, had affirmed that one of the pyramids was the tomb of Mycerinus, a king of the fourth dynasty: in that name *c* is pronounced hard, like *k*. For a long time nobody believed this, but at length Colonel Vyse had the good fortune actually to discover in one pyramid a coffin, which, upon examination, was found to bear upon it distinctly the name of King Menker, fourth dynasty—evidently, with only a slight alteration, the same name, and fully confirming Herodotus."

"I readily acknowledge," said Lady Crowsdale, "the force of both your examples, but I have been much swayed by a very ingenious dissertation that I read some years ago, by an old writer, M. de Beaufort, 'Sur l'Incertitude de l'Histoire Romaine.'"

"Yes, I well know that book," replied Mr. Desmond: "it is the foundation of Niebuhr's and of all the modern works on that subject, and no thinking person can refuse his assent to the doubts he expresses or to the principles he advocates. His object was not to reject but to purify history; and though he shows good reasons for doubting some of the Roman history for the first five centuries, I do not think he wished to lead us into extreme disbelief of all history. I hope, therefore, that in due time I may convert you to my views on the subject; but all this time we have wandered very far away from Guayana and your son's extremely interesting *history* of his adventures."

"Very much to my advantage, I am sure," said Lady Crowsdale, "and to that of my children. But I must not allow even him to rob us of our whole morning; and therefore before we return to Guayana I hope Miss O'Brien will allow us to see her gardens and to walk along the lake, which my young people have never seen."

Evelyn readily assented, but, colouring, confessed that she had greatly spoiled the appearance of the garden by her impatience to make improvements. The shrubs and plants which she had so foolishly removed looked miserably, though she hoped they were recovering.

"Such mistakes will occur, caused by a little too much eagerness," said Lady Crowsdale; "but how fortunate when it is only in regard to trifles of such comparatively small importance as shrubs and flowers that we are misled by our impatience!"

Evelyn's thoughts instantly flew to some of the less trivial mistakes caused by her impatience, and she felt that Lady Crowsdale's words were no consolation to her; the tears started to her eyes, and so strong were her feelings of shame at the moment, that the natural honesty of her mind might perhaps have led to other penitential confessions to Lady Crowsdale, but at that moment her father gave his arm to her Ladyship, and Evelyn, with one of the young ladies and Mrs. Manvers and the rest of the party, followed. After a late luncheon the Crowsdale party took their leave, and Mr. Desmond, highly pleased with the family, expressed his satisfaction at their apparent desire to cultivate an acquaintance with Evelyn.

CHAPTER LI.

Mr. Digby and his Son — Anecdotes of Dogs — Sagacity of a Mastiff —
Dogs seem to understand our Language — Shepherds' Dogs.

A few days after Lady Crowsdale's visit Mr. Digby, a gentleman of that country whom Evelyn had not yet seen, came to wait upon her. He was accompanied by a fine little boy, who seemed about the same age as Gerald, and rode on a nice white pony.

Mr. Digby apologised for his own and Lady Anne Digby's tardiness in calling upon Miss O'Brien, adding that nothing but the illness of his little boy, and consequent removal to Dublin for medical advice, should have prevented their paying the utmost attention to the granddaughter and representative of his old and valued friend Sir Connor O'Brien. Lady Anne waited only to recover from the fatigue of her journey home; but he had resolved he would not lose a day in coming, he was so anxious to pay his respects to Miss O'Brien."

For some time Mr. Digby talked unceasingly. Gerald and Mabel, though trying in every way they could imagine to entertain the little boy, began to think it hopeless. Gerald produced various boxes of games—ninepins, spillikens, books of prints—all in vain. Master Digby did not care about them; he had been spoiled while suffering from illness as much by an excessive degree of amusement as by indulgence, and he was tired of it. He had a discontented manner, and two or three times wondered when the pony would be rested enough, and when papa would go away. At last the children thought of telling him of their visit to the sea-side, and their adventures there; and as such a scene was all new to him he listened with some interest to the details about rocks and starfish, and boats and barnacles; but when he heard how Gerald had been saved from sinking in the sands by Lion, he jumped up, exclaiming, "Oh, the fine fellow!" and ran to

his father at the other end of the room to repeat to him the history of the dog and Gerald and the quicksands.

"That is worth hearing indeed," said Mr. Digby; "you are a dear child to tell me what you know pleases me. He knows, Miss O'Brien, that I am passionately fond of that fine animal, the dog—that sagacious, faithful creature! A friend of mine, also, was saved by a dog. I must say we do not value them half enough."

"I think it is extraordinary," said Evelyn, "that more accounts of their sagacity and fidelity have not been published. I am sure an extensive collection might be made of observations and anecdotes of an animal which most people have such constant opportunity of studying."

"There have been some works published on that subject," said Mr. Desmond, "but they are not as full, or rendered as interesting, as they might be. I know some very remarkable instances of the sagacity as well as the affection of dogs; but sagacity is scarcely an appropriate expression, for it is evident that some dogs have the power of reasoning, by which I mean combining ideas together, and deducing from them a result, upon which they act."

"Undoubtedly they have," Mr. Digby replied; "and you might have said much more, for the faithful dog has a generous forgetfulness of self, when performing his duty to his master, which shows what a noble creature he is: the dog that provides the savage with food by his swiftness, protects him by his bravery. The dogs that live with adventurers amidst wilds and dangers are remarkable for their power of endurance; while on the other hand the intelligence which can only result from their observation is very striking, such as the contrivance of the dogs of New Orleans, who, when wishing to cross the Mississippi, bark at the river's edge to attract the alligators; and when they are thus drawn from their separate haunts, and collected to one spot, the dogs set off at full speed, and, plunging into the water higher up the stream, cross it with impunity."

Gerald and his young companion had become so much interested by the subject of conversation, that by tacit consent they both went quite close to Mr. Digby's chair, in order to listen to all that was said.

"I knew a dog—a water-spaniel—Mr. Desmond, who, I assure you, saved the life of a nobleman in this country by unceasing attempts to awaken him when his castle was on fire. The smoky vapour made his sleep so heavy that, when half-roused, he pushed the dog away, and fell asleep again. The faithful creature, enduring all the affronts he received, and persevering in his endeavours, at last succeeded in rousing him,—and only just in time to snatch from a press near the chimney a flask of gunpowder, which would have been destruction to both had the advancing flames caught it."

"I hope, Sir," said Gerald, "that the dog himself escaped from the fire?"

"Yes, my little man, and was ever after beloved and cherished by the family, who had his picture painted to preserve the memory of his affectionate exertions."

"That dog must have been particularly attached to his master," said Gerald.

"Such instances, however," Mr. Digby continued, "are far from uncommon. When I was last in London I heard a very remarkable anecdote of a mastiff, which I would not venture to repeat had I not been assured of its truth by a gentleman of high integrity; but it is so curious that I almost fear I shall be considered as a retailer of romance."

"Oh! do tell it me, at least," said Gerald, pushing still closer to Mr. Digby. "I am quite ready to believe anything of those noble animals."

"Pray let us all hear it," said Mrs. Desmond; "and for my part I am not inclined to doubt anything that is told of their fidelity."

Mr. Digby, bowing, and again declaring that he had been assured of its truth, complied with the request.

"A gentleman living a few miles from London had a fine large mastiff watch-dog; during the day it was chained in its house, which stood in the yard, but in the evening it was always left at liberty. One day it seemed so restless and uneasy that, contrary to custom, it was let loose earlier than usual. It came repeatedly into the house, and, though as often sent away, he still returned, and lay down across the door of whichever room his master happened to be in. When his master was retiring for the night, the dog, whining, tried to

accompany him, but was driven down stairs. The faithful creature, however, would not be pacified, and came so often to the door of the bedroom, and was so unhappy, that at last his master let him in. He then seemed quite satisfied, and at once placed himself by the bedside; but, far from going to sleep, sat quite on the alert, with nose up, ears erect, and fore paws ready for instantly rising up, evidently watching for something. This so excited Mr. ——'s curiosity, that he lay awake in order to observe him. In the middle of the night, when all was still, a closet-door near the bed was gently opened, and two men came forth. The dog immediately flew at them, and, seizing the foremost by the throat, gave his master time to defend himself from the other. The villains, startled by the dog's instant attack, were easily taken—overpowered, as they were, by astonishment and fright, not only at the terrific attack of the dog, but at finding him on the watch, as if he expected them. Mr. —— discovered them to be his own groom and coachman. Falling on their knees, they confessed that, knowing he had received a large sum of money, they had thus conspired to rob him, but that no other human being was privy to their plot. How the dog could have guessed it was a matter of as great curiosity to them, for when they concerted their plan they whi-pered the agreement leaning over the dog's house, where he was chained. All that I can suppose is, that he understood their words, as he evidently had come, for his master's protection, to a place where he did not usually lie at night. I give it to you, ladies, as I had it."

"It is indeed a most singular history," said Mr. Desmond; "and whatever small circumstances there might have been that the culprits did not think proper to explain, such as coming to reconnoitre the closet or preparing their arms, I think it proves the intelligence of the dog."

"I once knew a dog," said Mrs. Manvers, "who appeared to understand whatever was said about a ball, with which he was fond of playing. The young ladies used to hide the ball, because whenever he saw it he was so anxious to play with it that he was troublesome; but they found that when they told each other where it was concealed he always understood them, and went to the place that he heard them mention—whether it

was a press, or a drawer, or a pocket ; for in those days ladies wore that useful article ! At last, when they wanted to speak of the ball before the dog they spelled it ; and even then he seemed to discover their meaning. Probably they looked towards the places they mentioned, and it is well known how sharply a dog's eyes follow those of his master."

"I have often heard of learned dogs, who could point out particular cards, or even the letters to spell particular words," said Mr. Desmond. "Teaching animals in that manner is, after all, merely a mechanical exercise ; and however it may excite wonder, it can be of no advantage to mankind ; it is like giving an unsuitable education to a peasant, who would have been far more happy in his own line of life."

"But you see dogs can be educated, papa," said Gerald, disappointed at the opinion his father had expressed.

"Yes, they can ; but I think it more judicious to teach them to be useful than merely wonderful. Shepherd-dogs show the advantage of a good education, and at the same time prove of how great a degree of attachment and zeal they are capable. Whatever may be the sagacity of the dog on particular points, it is undeniable that he possesses faculties in addition to those which are commonly called instinct ; and by the proper or improper exercise of those faculties we make the dog either faithful, useful, and gentle, or treacherous, cunning, and illnated."

"Very true, Sir ; very true," said Mr. Digby. "The shepherd-dogs are a very peculiar race, and their sagacity and their power of guiding the flocks intrusted to them are as wonderful as their honesty ; for I am told that when shepherds' dogs do tear and eat sheep—a habit they sometimes acquire—they never kill those under their own care. Their attachment to their employers is striking. When I was last in Scotland I was told that, in the snowy weather of the previous winter, a shepherd and his son went out in different directions to collect their flocks. After some time the dog and his master returned, but, to the surprise of the latter, his son did not come. Their faithful dog was uneasy—would not eat his dinner or lie down ; and he continued so restless and anxious to go out again, that at last his master indulged him,

and, going out with him, was led by the affectionate creature to a spot where his son was seated, unable to make his way home—because the bright sunshine reflected from the snow had actually deprived him of sight.”

“ Oh ! pray, papa, tell of the dog and the seven hundred lambs,” said little Digby.

“ Every one knows that circumstance, my dear,” said Mr. Digby ; “ but I believe children like to hear the same story a hundred times over.”

“ I am such a child that I do not know that story,” said Evelyn ; “ will you be so good as to tell it to me ? ”

“ With the utmost pleasure : anything in the world that Miss O’Brien wishes ! Hogg, the famous Ettrick Shepherd, had the care of seven hundred lambs, which, like foolish children, broke loose and scampered away in three divisions. The shepherd lamented to his dog the unfortunate occurrence, saying to him, ‘ They’re awa ! ’ It was dark ; the dog silently left his master’s side, and, while the shepherd sought in vain for the flock, collected the whole by some unaccountable power. At early dawn, when Hogg was returning home in despair at the loss of his charge, he perceived his dog *Sirrah* guarding the whole of the flock in a deep ravine, where he had collected the three divisions together without a single exception.”

“ I thank your son very much for that anecdote,” said Evelyn ; “ it was not known to me ; indeed I never have heard much on the subject, and I am excessively interested by all that has been related to-day. But how the dog can be taught to act with such skill seems difficult to understand.”

“ Just as we human creatures are often taught,” said Mr. Desmond,—“ by early giving them good habits. They are educated, I have read, by separating the puppy when very young from its mother, and accustoming it to the sheep, its future companions and charge. I saw this method mentioned at least by one of our late travellers in South America. He says, it is not uncommon in the province he was then describing (the Banda Oriental) to meet a large flock of sheep, guarded only by one or two dogs, some miles distant perhaps from house or man. The dog defends the flock intrusted to

his care with equal cleverness and intrepidity ; as you approach he immediately advances barking, in order to give them warning, while they remain quite close, waiting his further mandates. They learn also to bring home the flock every evening ; and their protection of them is sometimes very curious. The condor, an immense bird of that region, frequently attacks lambs and kids, and the shepherds' dogs are trained, the moment the enemy appears, to look upwards and bark violently."

"They are as wise as Scotch dogs, then," said young Digby.

"Yes, they are cunning enough," continued Mr. Desmond, "but not the less brave ; for the same traveller tells us that the shepherd-dog comes home every day for some meat ; and as soon as it is given to him skulks off, as if ashamed : the house-dogs pursue the stranger, and he runs till he has reached the flock, then turns round, and at the first serious bark all the house-dogs take to their heels. But it is still more singular that even a whole pack of hungry wild dogs will scarcely ever—never, I may say—attack a flock guarded by one of these faithful shepherds."

"That is a very curious circumstance : do you think, papa, that it arises from fear of the flock ?"

"No ; I think, with the traveller who mentions it, that it arises from the mutual feeling of respect and awe of those that are fulfilling their instinct of association, and doing the duty appointed to them."

"Very good—very good, indeed !" said Mr. Digby, laughing. "But while talking on this subject I forget myself. Come, Bobby, my boy, we must ride away : we have spent a very happy morning. This fellow is as fond of dogs and horses as myself ; and really they are so wise, I am afraid he will love them better than his book."

"I hope not," said Mr. Desmond, looking at the boy and patting his shoulder ; "for he will then be no better than a groom. Education makes the difference between man and man, as it does between dog and dog."

"Very good !" said Mr. Digby. "Farewell, Miss O'Brien. Farewell, Sir ! Now, Bobby, mount your pony, and let's be off."

"I think your own song gives the best reply to that," said Gerald: "'who knows—who knows?'"

"You see," said her father, "they are flying inland. Probably they have left the icy regions of the north, and are now the harbingers of a following storm. There is a general idea that their appearance indicates the approach of bad weather."

"I suppose," said Mabel, "that, if we understood their language, we should find they had said, as they passed over us, 'Prepare for a' the coming storm!' like the parrots you told me of in the island of Lemuy, by which the inhabitants said they had been warned of the approach of strangers."

"Yes, you allude to that curious red-breasted bird the cheucau, which inhabits the thick forests, and utters very peculiar noises."

Evelyn said she had never heard of that bird, and Mr. Desmond explained to her that, when the Beagle visited the island of Lemuy, off Chiloe, the inhabitants were much surprised at their arrival, saying to one another, "This is the reason we have seen so many parrots lately. The cheucau has not cried 'Beware!' for nothing."

"What a nice useful sort of parrot," said Gerald, "to come and put people on their guard against strangers!"

"Oh! I think the wild geese more useful," said Mabel; "because a storm is a much greater evil than a visit from a few strangers, who were probably only thinking of the productions and the natural history of the island on which they landed."

"Has it ever been ascertained whether the wild geese come again to the same places in their summer visits? Is there any way by which they might be recognised?" said Evelyn.

"It is generally believed that they do revisit them year after year," said Mrs. Manvers, "and even become attached to the places which they had been accustomed to frequent. My sister, who lives in Canada, mentions in one of her letters that a wild goose, which had been kept for some time at a farmhouse in her neighbourhood, became quite domesticated for some months, till at length it quitted the place and joined its friends above in their northward flight. The following

autumn a flock of wild geese passed over the same farm-yard when returning to the south. Three of the flock were observed to detach themselves from the rest, and fly down to the yard; and by some well-known signs the master of the house soon discovered that one of them was his old favourite, which evidently had brought her young family there to enjoy a little of civilized life; but they appeared to like it so much that they quietly remained there for some years afterwards."

"It shows how much every creature may be civilized by kind treatment," said Mrs. Desmond, "and how a taste for better society increases even among wild geese."

"Yes," said Mrs. Manvers, laughing at the idea; "and my sister says that, though these birds seem to acquire new tastes, they do not grow proud, or forgetful of their old acquaintance; for if a flock of wild geese pass over the place where they have been tamed and kept, the two parties have generally some little conversation with each other."

"Are they handsome birds, Mrs. Manvers? What sort of plumage have they?"

"My sister thinks the Canada wild-goose beautiful. The head and long neck are of a fine glossy black, a broad white stripe reaches from the eye down to the neck, the body grey. Her description agrees exactly with that of Bewick, who is always accurate I think. Last year one of them came floating down the river near my sister's house; when it reached the edge of the mill-dam, it rose from the water, flew to a little distance, then returned and alighted in a field near the garden. It was a singular circumstance, for they generally keep together in flocks, and seldom venture near a dwelling-house; but this one seemed quite at ease, and at length began to feed on the grass so very quietly, that my sister was quite flattered by its confiding manner."

"There is nothing more wonderful in the natural history of birds," said Mrs. Desmond, "than the regularity of their migrations, and the instinct by which they know how to direct their course to the climate suited to them."

"As to that," said Mabel, "I have read in one of my favourite books, 'The Journal of a Naturalist,' that the flocks of young birds are always conducted by old ones

London he immediately placed the eagle at the Zoological Garden, where for some time he visited it every day. When he ceased doing so the bird seemed at first to droop, and then became so fierce that no one could venture to approach it. After an interval of some years, Colonel S—— went to see the collection of birds at that Garden, and, immediately observing that one eagle seemed much disturbed, and was showing every sign of joy, Colonel S—— opened the door of the cage, notwithstanding the keeper's warning that it was a ferocious bird; he stroked and scratched its head; the bird in excessive delight laid his head on the Colonel's shoulder and rubbed his beak on him, and every time he saw him afterwards this grateful eagle showed the same kind of satisfaction."

"I do think," said Mrs. Manvers, "that these anecdotes are proofs that there is an instinct of gratitude in birds."

CHAPTER LIII.

Psalm xxii. — An exact Prediction — Invitation to all, Jew or Gentile.

"WHAT Psalm are you studying so attentively this morning, my dear Evelyn?" said Mrs. Manvers.

"It is the twenty-second," replied Evelyn; "though I had so often read it, I never before observed so distinctly the fullness and exactness of the prediction. The circumstances are so remarkable, and so minutely detailed in that ancient prophecy, that I feel surprised how any one can read its express fulfilment in the history of the crucifixion without being convinced that it refers to Jesus Christ alone."

"Yes, it is so precisely descriptive of our Saviour's sufferings, that it is, you know, appointed to be read in our Church service on Good Friday."

"It seems to me that there is but little, if any, of this Psalm which can be supposed to relate to David, as we find stated in its title," said Evelyn. "I feel, as I read, that it is the Messiah who speaks, and the history related by the Evangelists explains and marks its meaning."

"Unquestionably," replied Mrs. Manvers; "for this touching Psalm directs our thoughts to the crucifixion; and while it forcibly alludes to that awful event as recorded in Scripture, the best feelings of the grateful and contrite heart are awakened as we read of the patient submission of Christ to the Divine will, the affecting urgency of his prayer, the intensity of his sufferings, and his unswerving trust in Almighty aid."

"I wonder," said Evelyn, "that people can be blind to the prophetic application of this Psalm!"

"It is the more surprising," Mrs. Manvers remarked, "because our Lord applied it to Himself when He cried, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' And the very

words of the Psalm were actually used by the chief priest when Jesus was on the cross, as you find in St. Matthew, chap. xxvii. ver. 43, 'He trusted in God—let Him deliver Him now.' ”

“ And yet the Jews perversely and obstinately continued blind to the truth ! ”

“ Unfortunately their prejudices, and their expectations of the Messiah's coming in worldly grandeur, veiled the truth from their understandings,” said Mrs. Manvers ; “ and to this day we see the consequences of their blindness in the scattered and despised descendants of Israel. We cannot therefore be surprised at their homeless, wandering, and degraded state ; but let us, Evelyn, who profess that we do believe, prove our conviction of the truth by obedience to the precepts on which our Lord so emphatically insisted, and, while we triumph in the Christian's hope, let us treat those who are in error with forbearing charity.”

“ Indeed I will try to do so, dear Mrs. Manvers : if we disobey the precepts of the Gospel we certainly have no excuse ; we can plead neither ignorance nor early prejudice. But I observe that there is a very striking change of style and purport in the latter part of this Psalm, where it no longer expresses the same dejection.”

“ Yes, my dear ; instead of expressing anguish or abasement, the language becomes that of praise and triumph. Beginning at verse 22, the prophet, while celebrating the victory of our Lord over sin and death, foretells the establishment of his kingdom in the uttermost regions of the earth. Accordingly, when our Lord was about to ascend on high, he commissioned the Apostles to proclaim the glad tidings, and invite all to receive salvation in his name.”

“ That invitation was, I suppose, addressed to all who would accept it, whether Jew or Gentile, rich or poor ? ” said Evelyn.

“ Certainly ; the psalmist says it is sent alike to all them that be fat—implying the rich and prosperous—as well as to all they that go down into the dust ; in other words, to the meanest and most abject : in short, to all who shall bow in faith to Him, and who, believing, will come to Him.”

“But I suppose the whole prophecy is not yet fulfilled?”

“No; as yet only in part,” replied Mrs. Manvers; “the Lord will bring it about in his own good time, and it will assuredly be accomplished. The expression, ‘unto a people that shall be born,’ shows that the prophet beheld that event in a distant futurity. He foretells that happy time, when errors and differences of opinion shall cease, and all nations and peoples shall have one faith; when all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him.”

CHAPTER LIV.

Mr. Driver arrives — The Widow Green's Remonstrance — She defeats Mr. Driver — Mr. Driver's Opinion of the Irish.

Two very unwelcome letters came by the next morning's post to Evelyn—one from Mr. Stanley, to inform her that the difficulty of procuring clerical assistance to do his parochial duty quite prevented his coming over at that time to meet Mr. Driver, and obliged him to defer his promised visit till May: the other was from Mr. Driver, to announce that, punctual to his intention, he would be at Cromdarragh Castle on the 1st of November.

This was an evil, however, which she knew must come, and was in fact only rendered such by her own prejudice against him, though somewhat aggravated now by her dread of his interference and of continual objections on his part to all she had been doing or proposed to do.

The disappointment of her hope of seeing Mr. Stanley, and perhaps Violet, was very great; and though she knew that it was incumbent on Mr. Driver to come at that season, she felt vexed at the idea of his being at the castle without Mr. Stanley.

After some reflection, however, she began to see that all this was very childish, and that, instead of giving way to vexation at Mr. Stanley's not coming, she ought to rejoice that her father would now prolong his stay at the castle in order to meet Mr. Driver, over whom she felt that he must acquire an influence, from his knowledge of the people and of the country, and that his presence would in every way be her best comfort and support. This conviction soon restored her usual cheerfulness; and with the candour which was one of her characteristics, acknowledging her first emotions of vexation and discontent, she warmly expressed to her father how much she was rejoiced in every way at having him now with her.

On the appointed day Mr. Driver arrived—cold, dry, and stiff in manner as before, but less imperious and dictatorial. The under-agent came to meet him; and notwithstanding Mr. Driver's prejudices against the Irish, or rather *Oyrish*, as he called them, he remarked that the rents were uncommonly well paid. Many applications were made to him by small tenants for help to repair their houses; but though always abusing the Irish for being contented with such hovels, he was little disposed to make any allowance in their rent for the purpose of improving them; and Evelyn, finding that he never was willing to listen to her, prudently determined not to interfere at present. Then came on the business of turning out tenants to whom notice to quit had been given, and amongst them was the widow Green. When she came to pay her rent, he looked at his list, saying to her, "You are one of the defaulters to whom I gave notice."

"Sir, I have now paid you up to the last halfpenny, and I have no right to be turned off the land."

"You have no right, indeed; a good idea that! No, good woman, you have no right at all to have the land—that is what you mean—and I have a right to take the land and let it to a more thriving tenant."

"A right, Sir, to take my land, and I not owing a fraction of the rent!—there's neither law nor justice in the kingdom if you do that. And I that had a lase, and my husband and his father before me!"

"Your lease has expired, good woman, and besides you are unable to till your land."

"Oh, Sir, what am I and my children to do for bread?" said the poor woman, crying. "Indeed, Sir, whoever said I was unable to till the land told you false, and it's my dear young lady can tell you so, if she'd come and speak for me."

"Your young lady is a child and knows nothing about the matter."

"Why then indeed, indeed, it's she that does, and she promised I wouldn't be turned off the land, and repaired the cabin too, so she did, the sweet young creature! the Lord love her!"

"She had no right to make any such promise, for she is

not of age; and she was a fool to spend her money on your cabin."

"Well, Sir, I know she is not of age, but she will in a year or two, and why wouldn't her promise be kept for her now? and why would you go agin her, Sir, to make an enemy of her by thwarting her? When she is of age, sure her ladyship will remimber her own promises, so she will; and she'll never be displased with those that helped her to keep them, for it is only to her they'll be accountable: but you know, Sir—I beg your pardon for telling you, but still in all it's true—that the one that goes agin her pleasure now will not be in favour when she is the raal mistress."

"I do not understand you, good woman."

"Ogh! well, Sir, you won't be so hereafter, and I hope you will wait a bit before you sign my death-warrant, as I may call it."

"Go, woman, you need wait no longer. You must quit," said he.

She stopped at the door, and, fixing her eyes steadily on Mr. Driver, exclaimed—

"Then I tell you what, Sir; I'll never submit to it! I have justice on my side—ay, and I'll have it, whatever your law may be!"

"What do you mean? what do you mean, woman, by that? You have both law and justice from me."

"Oh! you are a mighty fine gintleman, but I don't like your law." She paused a moment; Mr. Driver was silent; and, her courage increasing, she added—"Now, Sir, you'd better consult Mr. Desmond, and be cautious what you do; for I tell you what—it is the hard agent that sets us all wrong, and a little spark will light a flame that will bring mischief to many, great or small; and now the lady lives here—the Lord in heaven bless her!—among her people; and it's she might be happy, and we too, if we were let alone, but in justice like that we'll never bear—no, never!"

Mr. Driver, though usually very determined against opposition, seemed to reflect. The force of her words was increased by the calmness with which they were uttered; they fell on his ears more like a warning than an imprecation.

He secretly wished he had never troubled himself about her insignificant bit of land, and thought, after all, it mattered little about her keeping it, if he could get safely out of her reach. Some uncomfortable thoughts passed through his mind, while pretending to search for a paper; and he was yet undecided, the widow Green standing composedly with her eyes fixed on his countenance, when Evelyn entered the room. With her natural impetuosity, she began in rather an imperious tone—

“Mr. Driver, I am come to request——”

The widow made her a sign, half muttering, “Softly, dear;” for she saw the working of Mr. Driver’s mind, and was afraid Evelyn might spoil all. But Mr. Driver, quickly perceiving the advantage to be derived from her interference, said, in a very humble manner—

“Any request of yours, Miss O’Brien, I shall be happy to attend to.”

Evelyn was so unprepared for such an answer that she doubted her ears, and was silent.

“Proceed, I pray you, Madam.”

“I have to request that this industrious woman may have a renewal of her lease,” said Evelyn, controlling herself, and suiting her manner to Mr. Driver’s, for she had not the least idea of what was in his mind, nor that, even had she been imperious in the extreme, he would at that moment have gladly yielded to her.

“If you, Miss O’Brien, think her deserving of it; but I heard that she racked her land, as they say here, and could not pay her rent, and that her house was dropping down: under such circumstances, I thought the poor-house was the best place for her; but if you, Miss O’Brien, desire she should keep the land—that is, if you really think she will pay her rent—and if you——”

“Yes! yes! I will answer for her. She will now keep her cottage in repair and do what is right by the land, and I am sure she will never be in arrear again.”

“And how has she paid her rent now, and all the arrears?” said Mr. Driver, beginning to gather more courage. “But I must just take leave to say, Miss O’Brien, that your promising renewals, or leases, or other things of that sort to

your tenantry, is out of all rule: if it were not that you make it such a particular request to grant a renewal to this good woman, who you say is so industrious, I would not do it."

"I thank you; but really I think *my* promises should——"

"Now, my lady," said the widow Green, interrupting her, "since the gentleman has been so good to me, may be, as I am here, I could get the lase complate at once, if you plase, and then I won't be troubling him ever agin. Will I call the under-agent, Sir? he's only outside the door, trying to settle another dispute."

"What a country it is!" exclaimed he, as she went out without waiting for his answer. "There is nothing but quarrels and discontent from one end to the other. I wonder you are not afraid to live in it, Miss O'Brien."

"I have never had any reason for fear," she replied. "I find the people grateful for any kindness."

"But idle, cunning, and revengeful," said Mr. Driver.

"No, Mr. Driver; no, indeed! quite the reverse, except where they meet with injustice. *My* tenantry will continue faithful and quiet; for as long as I am at the head of the property I will never suffer them to be unjustly treated!"

Evelyn was just rising into one of her fits of pride and uncontrolled enthusiasm, when Mr. Desmond came to see how she had succeeded with Mr. Driver, and, being thus fortunately interrupted, she became calm, and told her father that Mr. Driver had complied with her request.

The widow Green soon returned to the room, saying very coolly, but firmly, "Now will your honour be plased to give the order to the sub-agent here to complate the lase you were so condescending as to promise me just now?"

Mr. Driver looked rather astonished at the coolness with which she spoke of a promise from him; but he gave the necessary directions, and she expressed her thanks as humbly as if his compliance had not been extorted by the mixed determination and artfulness in the manner in which she had spoken. Retiring with a profound curtsy, she soon met her son in the yard, and said to him, with a significant nod and smile, "I done it—I done it well!" and she went home all happiness and triumph.

After the business of the morning was over, Mr. Desmond invited Mr. Driver to walk with him to the schoolhouse, the widow Green's, and many of the cottages in the hamlet, in order to show him that the money spent on the repairs of cottages had been judiciously laid out; and that his daughter was steady, young as she was, in her desire to improve and civilise the people on her estate, by giving them at the same time comfortable dwellings and useful education. Mr. Driver could not deny that much had been done—"more than could have been expected from such a child:" Mr. Desmond, therefore, urged the advantage of placing a sum in the under-agent's hands for the improvement of the property and of the tenantry; but Mr. Driver declared *they* could not be improved; and rents must not be spent so; "for," said he, "the more these *Oyrish* are assisted the more indolent they become."

Mr. Desmond tried to explain to him the mischief which is caused in Ireland by agents, who come merely to collect rents and then hurry away, without showing any desire to increase the comfort of the tenants, or any consideration for their difficulties; and especially by withholding the necessary assistance to improve their land, which would render it more beneficial not only to the occupier but to the owner. "Besides," added he, "you must be aware that in England it is the landlord that keeps the tenements in repair."

"But I tell you," said Mr. Driver, "that would be, in this country, a perfect waste of money; they will take it and do nothing, and next day turn against you."

"I have not found it so," replied Mr. Desmond; "I know by my own experience what an advantage the struggling cottager, or small farmer, may derive from timely assistance in draining and fencing his little holding, and in making judicious repairs."

"They have no right to expect it," said Mr. Driver.

"I do not agree with you as to that: however, supposing they have not, then it is the greater boon to them."

"Oh, then they will imagine it their right, and expect it."

"And why should they not expect kindness and assistance from their landlord, and therefore from his agent and representative? Believe me, it is our duty both to help them in

their difficulties and to promote their comforts by a moderate outlay, and above all by education."

"Education!" exclaimed Mr. Driver; "it is all thrown away, unless you could educate them to some sense of gratitude."

"I have almost always met with gratitude in the people about me," said Mr. Desmond; "but at least they have a strong sense of justice; and you will find it, in the long run, more politic to give graciously than to be forced or frightened into it by threats."

"Well, that is a point that requires consideration," said Mr. Driver, as they returned from their walk, his face growing first red and then pale, and looking around as if fearful of enemies concealed by the dusky light of a November afternoon."

CHAPTER LV.

Evelyn's Accounts — Mr. Driver's Opinion of Planting— Petition from a poor Cottager — Mr. Driver's Sentence — Evelyn determined to help him — Irish Land-Agents — Mr. Driver departs.

MR. DRIVER's prejudices distorted into what he called the signs of the times everything that the tenantry said or did, and increased his anxiety to leave Ireland, though he acknowledged that the rents were in general well paid, and that he had no reason to find fault in that respect. The impression, however, which the widow Green's threat had made on his mind, being magnified by his illiberal reflections, he imagined there was an alarming spirit of discontent arising everywhere, and he dreaded the result.

The last morning of his visit was spent in examining into Evelyn's household arrangements, and the manner in which she had managed the allowance which he and Mr. Stanley had allotted to her. Evelyn, anticipating a lecture on extravagance, explained to him all she had done, and, with a degree of self-control of which her father had not imagined her capable, answered the numerous inquiries he made. Her manner was, indeed, cold and stately, but she betrayed no impatience, and acknowledged candidly she had been in some respects imprudent; adding, however, that it was caused by the narrowness of her income, which she found too small to admit of her giving the assistance she wished to give to those who were in want, and who naturally looked to her for aid.

"Nobody intended that you should assist them," said Mr. Driver; "it would be endless, and can't be done."

"But the people naturally look up to me for help, and I never can—and never will—refuse to assist them," she replied with calmness and firmness.

"As to that," said he, turning to Mr. Desmond, "I have

been considering what you said yesterday, Sir, in regard to helping the tenantry when distressed : you seemed to recommend it ; I should have thought it only a childish way of bribing the people to keep quiet, and which would in fact double their demands."

"However that may be," Mr. Desmond replied, "it certainly doubles the value of the land, and therefore the farmer, if he manages well, will not require so much assistance after the improvements have begun to pay."

"All visionary, I think," replied Mr. Driver ; "however, since that is your opinion, and in order to keep these people quiet, I think of following your suggestion, and allowing the agent to lay out a certain sum yearly, during Miss O'Brien's minority, in draining and improving the land for those who are unable to do it for themselves."

"I am glad to hear that," said Evelyn ; "but there is much to be done besides draining and improving the land, and which I hope you will take into your calculations."

"What do you mean, Miss O'Brien?"

"I mean, repairing and improving the houses of my poor tenants, and planting round each, so as to afford both shelter and ornament."

"Ornament, indeed !—it would be a difficult job to ornament those mud cabins : you might spend all your income—as you have indeed now spent all, and more than you could command—trying to do that which is an impossibility. The land may be improved ; but as to ornament, and comfort of any kind, the people cannot understand them ; and trees would be thrown away or burnt, and both would be useless."

"I cannot think either the one or the other useless ; I think both very essential," said Evelyn—the spirit she had so long controlled rising as she spoke—"and I do desire, Mr. Driver, that I may be allowed to judge what is to be done on my own property ! For my part, planting is, I think, as necessary in this bare country as draining land, or anything of that sort. It would make a vast difference in the beauty of the country. I intend that every part of my property shall be as well planted as that immediately adjoining the castle. And, therefore, Mr. Driver," continued Evelyn, her manner be-

coming more and more determined, "I do request you to make that your object, your chief object; draining and other improvements may follow, and——"

"Stop, my dear Evelyn! listen to me," said her father.

"She will listen to nobody!" said Mr. Driver. "Miss O'Brien forgets that her tenantry, whom she is so desirous to make comfortable, cannot live upon trees. I should have thought that she would rather have tried to improve their food, instead of giving them oaks and elms, which are worse than potatoes, and which they cannot eat."

"I do not understand you, Sir," said Evelyn, looking to her father for explanation and support.

"Mr. Driver means, my dear, that by improving the land you will increase its produce, and enable your poor tenantry to have better food, and thus supply them with the means of being more comfortable than they now appear; and that, you know, is of more importance than plantations, if you cannot accomplish both; and so far I quite agree with Mr. Driver."

Evelyn was rather disconcerted at her father's answer; but was just beginning to urge something more about the want of trees in Ireland, when she was interrupted by the entrance of a servant with a note to her. It was a very shabby-looking production, but was not very ill spelt. The purport was a petition from a poor cottager on a remote part of the estate for a little assistance to bring his land into good order. Illness from year to year, he said, had wasted his strength and his money, and the ground produced little or nothing beyond what just paid the rent.

Evelyn showed the note to her father, who read it to Mr. Driver, saying it would be desirable to see the place themselves.

"Turn him out, turn him out," exclaimed Mr. Driver. "He will never be a good tenant now that he has become a beggar—paying his rent into one hand, and asking you to give it back to him with the other. Such people as we have to deal with here!"

"You have no pretext for turning him out," said Mr. Desmond, "if he has paid up all his rent, and that can be easily ascertained by asking the under-agent, who is, I believe, in the house at present."

"I am very sure, from the manner in which he writes, that this poor man has paid up his rent exactly; so let us consider what can be done for him," said Evelyn.

"Nothing can be done for him," said Mr. Driver.

"Something must be done—and shall!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"Pray let us inquire about him before you determine anything," said Mr. Desmond, endeavouring to preserve peace between Evelyn and Mr. Driver.

Evelyn rang the bell hastily, and desired the footman to call Mr. Carey, the agent.

"I wish to learn from him myself whatever particulars he knows of this poor man—for he ought to know about him, and ought to——"

Mr. Carey's entrance interrupted Evelyn, who immediately showed him the note she had received, and inquired if the account was true, and if the distress was such as the man described.

"I have no doubt of his poverty," he replied; "and I can answer for his having paid the rent for his little holding, such as it is. The land never was good: this last year the poor man has been so ill that he could not work as he formerly did, and both his farm and his affairs are in a bad way. I have been wishing, since he was reduced, that there were some means of assisting him, and other such poor tenants, to bring their land into better tillage."

"Now, papa, you see I was right," said Evelyn triumphantly. "Now what is to be done?"

"Let us speak to the man first, if he is still here."

On inquiry Mr. Desmond found that he was gone, but had said he would come back in a few days for the answer.

Mr. Driver shrugged his shoulders, and said nothing. At length he asked at what distance the man lived.

"Oh! yes, Mr. Driver," exclaimed Evelyn, "that is what I was just thinking of: it would be best to go there. Let us see with our own eyes, and then we can the better judge. If you will come with papa and me, we can easily drive there now; or if it is too late for this morning, cannot we go to-morrow?"

"No, I thank you, Miss O'Brien. Mr. Carey is much

better adapted to such an inquiry than I am : he understands those abodes of dirt ; to me they seem all alike—one as bad as another.”

“ But, without visiting his house, you could see the state of his farm—what assistance would be requisite : indeed you ought to come,” said Evelyn.

“ Excuse me, it is not my business ; and for my part, I do not see that we are called on to do anything for this man at present. Perhaps, if he continue ill till next rent-day, we might remit five per cent. But if Mr. Desmond is of opinion that I should grant him some assistance now, I will do as he recommends. Take notice, however, that if, as I suspect, any relief given to this whining fellow proves to be so much money thrown away, I shall call on you and him to bear me harmless when you attain your majority.”

Evelyn did not quite comprehend the expression he used ; but was so glad to hear that he would help the poor man that she asked no questions. Mr. Desmond readily promised to secure Mr. Driver from all hazard of blame when his daughter came of age. He then took the opportunity of again hinting to him that it is a great mistake on the part of agents, who have the interest of their employers at heart, not to look more closely into the real state of the inferior order of tenants. By making themselves acquainted with the case of each, and by giving a little encouragement from time to time to zeal and industry, a tenantry may be made valuable and respectable ; whereas, if left entirely to their own resources, ignorant as many of them are of good tillage, their land degenerates, the men become slothful from disappointment, and their families sink into idleness, misery, and vice, because the agent does not think it his business to know anything more of the tenants than whether they have or have not paid duly on the rent-day.”

“ I am sure their houses would be cleaner if we visited them more frequently,” said Evelyn ; “ and indeed, papa, I intend to go among all the poor people about me continually, and to do all I can for their comfort.”

“ I think, then, Miss O'Brien,” said Mr. Driver, “ that you will never have one sovereign to rub on another. I dare say there is much wisdom in Mr. Desmond’s remarks ; but at

present it would not suit my arrangements to go to-morrow to inspect this man's farm. I must be in London as soon as possible, and I beg you not to interrupt my business this day with any more petitions."

Mr. Driver was therefore left in undisturbed enjoyment of his accounts for the remainder of the day; and, having made the necessary arrangements for Evelyn's income for the next half-year, he departed early the following morning, rejoiced to get away from a people whom he imagined were so much to be feared.



CHAPTER LVI.

Mr. Desmond and Evelyn visit O'Rourke, the distressed Tenant — Poverty and Sickness — Joy and Gratitude — O'Rourke's old Father — Irish Readers.

THE weather smiled on Evelyn's intention on the morning she had arranged for her drive. It was one of those delightful soft, sunny November days for which Ireland is remarkable; and, taking advantage of it, she and her father set out in the pony-carriage directly after breakfast, as O'Rourke, the poor tenant whom she was going to visit, lived several miles distant on a small detached part of the estate.

As they advanced they found the road in some places very bad, being little frequented; but it was interesting to Evelyn, from the wild appearance of the country, and from the range of rocky hills through which it passed. The hills were still decked with a profusion of furze-blossoms, while here and there one or two primroses in sheltered crevices of rock proved the mildness of the spring-like season. At length they found the lane so rough that they alighted, and, walking on for some time through the valley which wound among these furzy hills, arrived at O'Rourke's house, which a boy herding a few cattle pointed out in answer to their inquiries.

It had once been a large and roomy cottage: half of it was now in ruin, the roof partly fallen in, and no sashes in the windows. It was, however, prettily situated, built against the side of a hill, which sheltered it. In front was a little garden and a small field. A streamlet which rose among the hills, and came clear and gurgling down the declivity at one side of the house, slowly trickled along its shallow bed in the low ground; but overflowing its banks in wet weather, and spreading over the land, had caused an unprofitable marsh, which produced unwholesome exhalations. In those low grounds

the water of the stream was almost concealed by grass, but its winding course was marked by a border of brilliant green, which Evelyn mistook for a path; finding it too damp, however, she quitted it for the wild and rugged lumps of rock which jutted out from the foot of the hill, and actively skipped from rock to rock towards the house. When near the cabin, she stopped her father and exclaimed, "Now, papa! do look: can you conceive a prettier place than this might be made by a little planting along the brow of these hills, and an ever-green grove to shelter the house and garden. Am I not right in thinking that trees are indispensable?"

"You would be right if there was not something much more indispensable to be done first."

"What do you mean, papa?"

"Look round, my dear, at the state of the farm; at the numerous patches of rushes, and the water standing in the furrows, and even in the trenches of the garden: you cannot doubt that it would be advantageous to the land to carry off this superfluous water. And there would be no difficulty in doing it; for you may perceive that below this field, where we are making our way through these wet paths, the stream again flows briskly on, and that there is evidently a fall in the ground to that lower part of the rivulet, by which the whole might be completely drained, and the land rendered fit for tillage, though now, as you see, choked up by all those rushes. Now, my dear, are you not convinced that, however ornamental trees might be, there is something much more essential to be done first, and in which it would be more desirable that you should assist this poor O'Rourke—good crops to supply food being more necessary to him than ornament?"

"I suppose you are right, papa, though I do not understand the business of draining. I only know that I could not possibly prevent the river from overflowing its banks, but that I could supply trees,—and I am sure they would be very pretty here."

"Yes, they would; but unless the swamps be dried and the land improved, planting it will neither give health to the inhabitants, nor improvement to the crops, nor increased value to the farm. All these should be the first object of a proprietor

of land ; and it is astonishing that people do not see how much permanent benefit might be effected by a little judicious help given in time to the tenant."

" Whatever course you recommend, papa, I am ready to adopt : you shall direct, and I will assist most willingly."

" Yes, that I do believe, my kind-hearted daughter. Mr. Driver has empowered the under-agent to appropriate a small portion of the rents to the aid of those industrious tenants who really require it. The details may be safely left to him ; but you can do much yourself by taking an interest in the progress of these improvements, and by making good character the first step to a favourable consideration of their wants. In the present case no great expense of money or time will be requisite. The bed of the stream must be lowered ; one or two deep drains must be carried through the swell of the ground, and the ditches cleared and made deeper ; and then you will see the stagnant waters subside and the rushes disappear, nature will resume her wonted energy, and the whole appearance of the farm and its occupier will be changed for the better ; and then my little planter may carry into execution her projected screens and groves."

" Thank you, papa, for your advice. I will tell the poor man at once that I will do it all for him."

" Stay a little, my dear ; do not be in too great haste to make promises. Let us now go to the house, and look at the family, and hear what O'Rourke has to say for himself and his farm."

The unexpected entrance of Evelyn and her father caused great surprise ; but O'Rourke and his family welcomed them with cordial civility, though evidently ignorant who they were. A pale young girl, rising from her seat, wiped it with her apron, and offered it with a simple and graceful curtsy to Evelyn, who received all their attentions with that bright and gracious smile which endeared her to the poor, and which always enhances kindness. The sallow paleness of the children and their father, but lately recovered from ague, and the appearance which they all had of debility and distress, struck her forcibly ; but she soon perceived that was not all, for in a little room, the door of which was open, near where she stood,

lay a woman on a wretched bed, and beside her an infant but a few days old. O'Rourke, pointing to her, said, as if apologizing for her, "The wife is not able to rise, Miss. She gave me a young son the other day, and is *donny* enough—and he too; but, plase the Lord, he'll be a blessing to us yet!"

"Indeed, I hope so," said Evelyn, trying to repress the tear excited by her ready sympathy.

O'Rourke observed her countenance as she surveyed the comfortless house. When her eyes turned compassionately on the poor woman, he said, "Ah! Miss, we never were so ill off before; and troth it's ashamed I am that travellers should see our poverty—but it won't be so always!"

"What is the cause of your being so much distressed now?"

"Why, Miss, many a thing has brought trouble upon us—ague, and bad crops, and bad food; and, more than them—for we are used to them—our good old landlord—rest his soul!—is dead, and the new one is a young lady, who has got her English guardians, and them sort of people don't understand our Irish ways; and yet to be sure the rint was to be paid, or I'd be put out; and the oats were bad, and so I sold most of the furniture to make it up, Miss."

"Good heavens! how little we know of the sufferings of the poor!" exclaimed Evelyn. "But I never would have let them turn you out!"

"You, Miss! Ah! then, may be you are the young mistress herself?" said he, looking from her to her father, who had purposely delayed explaining the cause of their visit that they might see the true state of the family. "Ah! then, praised be the Lord in heaven, who has brought you to me this day!" and throwing himself on his knees, he poured forth thanks and prayers and blessings.

His wife saw him from her bed, and, not knowing why he knelt, cried out in alarm, "What is it? Ogh! then, Pat, what is it, jewel?"

Rising quickly he said, "Oh! it is joyful news, dear: it is the young mistress herself that 's come to see us all the way from the castle this blessed day!"

The poor woman, quite overcome by the surprise, almost

fainted, but the eldest girl ran to her assistance, and, while she was recovering, her husband exclaimed, half crying—

“She’s wake; it is she that is wake, indeed, the poor body! But, sure, won’t she get strong now? for your gracious visit will be all as one as a charm upon her. And now, Ma’am, may I ask if your ladyship got the bit of a letter I made bould to write to you?”

“Yes; I received it yesterday. My father and I have come in consequence to look at the state of your land, and I will——”

Mr. Desmond here interrupted her by inquiring “how the land had ever got into such bad condition?”

“Oh! indeed, Sir, it is not asy to say how it came on; but a large family makes it hard to get work done, for want of money to pay for it—and bad seasons, and illness, and the wet of the land, and the want of a drain or two.”

“Why did you never apply for help to my grandpapa?”

“Is it to the ould master, Sir Connor? Sure I did, and he often let the rint go and would not ask it; but still and all, we never got comfortable; for if he did remit the rint, sure we wanted so much besides with it that we could never drain the land rightly, and so the crops got worse and worse. This year the oats was bad, the potatoes was wet, and we all, or at laste the most of us, grew sick, and would have died but for the minister and his lady, that live hard by. Oh, Miss! it was them that were good to me and mine. So we have paid the rint now at any rate, and we cannot be ejected; and we are all better now; and though reduced to potatoes and salt, which we never were before, for the cow is gone to help the rint, we are thankful and content, putting our trust in the Lord; and when the wife is up, we’ll do well.”

“Indeed I hope so! I wish I had known sooner of your distress,” said Evelyn, looking at the scanty fire of wet turf, which seemed little likely to give warmth to the poor pale-faced children crowding round it to watch the boiling of the potatoes.

While listening to O’Rourke, she perceived a bed, on which lay an old man, in one corner of the room, near the only window that gave light, the others being half broken and stuffed

with rags. He had a book in his hand, and seemed reading in a low voice to an intelligent-looking girl of thirteen or fourteen, who listened to him attentively, though sometimes she could not help looking away from him to the pretty young lady who had come in.

"It's looking at my father you are, Miss, or my lady I should say," whispered O'Rourke, who followed her eyes whichever way she turned them. "He is near ninety, and almost bed-ridden. Little Stacy, the good child, is always attending him when she is at home, and reading for him and taching him—taching us all, I may say, for it's all as one; and in troth, Miss, that child is the life of us all, and it's she that has given us comfort in one way or another for the last year or so."

"And how has such a young creature been able to be so useful?"

"Why, Miss, when we were all sick and lying, she nursed us—so she did; and she did more, for she taught us to find comfort in the mercy of the Lord."

"Poor child! how young she looks to be able to teach you!" said Evelyn.

"Stacy, the darling, or Anastatia I should say, Ma'am, as she was christened, used to go to a school near his Riverence's, not far off, where she learned many a thing that was good, and when she'd come home, sure, she'd repeat it all to us. I was idle enough before my illness. I'll tell you no lie, Miss; if I had been industrious I would not now be so distressed; but she used to tell us the beautiful words she learnt there, and they made us think. And a good man who reads at the school, and for some neighbours, came here with her sometimes, and read to us out of the same good book where she learned. And oh! Ma'am, a blessing was in that book, for we learned in it what we never knew before, and all in our own blessed Irish; for not one of us but myself knows English well, except Stacy that learned at school, nor did we know how to read, not even my ould father."

"But your father, as I believe you called him, seems to be reading now—he has a book in his hand."

"Oh! yes, plase your ladyship, he larned when he was

going on ninety to read that book, because it was so fine, and in our own natural language too; and he can read it now sometimes with himself, and other times with little Stacy who helped to larn him in it; but it was the kind man who read to us that taught him the most and gave him the book."

"And does the little girl ever read it to you too?"

"Oh! doesn't she? it's she that reads it to me, and to the wife too, and so does the good *reader*, but he comes at night only, and then we get a candle, or a rush, and, though ever so tired, we listen to him. We often say, 'Well though we are badly off, we are happier than we were when we were ignorant of the holy book; for we have learned to be Christians, and so, to be more contented with our lot.'"

"Does that good man still continue to come to you? but why at night?"

"Because, my lady, he is busy in the day, for he must work, too, to support himself; but when he can come at night, the old man then reads to him as a child at school, and the wife listens; and a neighbour or two sometimes comes in."

"And you have not been prevented by sickness from hearing the good reader?"

"Oh no, Miss; nor by business nor anything. In troth, to hear his sweet voice, and to listen to the blessed things he tells out of that book, rests us when tired; he larns us to be peaceable good Christians, to do all our duties, and how we'll be saved; and sure enough it has been a comfort and a support to us in sickness and in neglect; and now has not Heaven sent us your gracious visit to comfort us? and, please God, we shall all do well."

"Indeed, I heartily hope that you may, and I should be glad to help you as far as it is in my power, but I think your own industry will be better than any little help I can give."

"Yes, my lady, if I could but get the land into order, and some of the wet drained; but I am not able to do it all myself. It's this wet marsh here so near the house that gives us the ague, and I have never got my strength again. I know it could be drained mighty asy, for there's a beautiful fall from the far side of the field to the valley below, as this gentleman, your father, can see."

"I suppose, if you hired a few labourers to help you, the drains would be quickly made, and you would get rid of the ague——" Evelyn was going to add that she would help him to pay them, but her father, perceiving that she was going to take out her purse, and fearful of her imprudence, interrupted her, saying it was better to speak to the agent in regard to what was to be done. She therefore only assured O'Rourke that he should soon hear from her; and urging him to keep up his spirits, she put a little money into his hand; then, going over to the old man, she begged to hear some of the holy book in Irish. As soon as he understood her request, he had himself raised up in the bed, and, proud of the honour, read some verses from the Gospel of St. John, translating each for her into his own simple but forcible expressions, which showed how deeply he felt and believed the words of Truth and Life. It was a touching scene.

Mr. Desmond then had a little conversation with the venerable old man, whose energy astonished him, and he felt more than ever convinced of the utility of the Irish readers, who give the poor the comfort of pure religious Christian knowledge.

Evelyn sat down for a few minutes by the bedside of O'Rourke's wife, but it was an effort to the poor creature to speak in English, and Evelyn was not sorry that the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a person who brought a little jug of gruel from the "good minister's lady," as they all called her.

"May the Lord in heaven bless her!" exclaimed O'Rourke. "It is she has saved the woman's life, and given larning to the children, and comfort to us all."

"I wish I could see her, that I might thank her for her kindness to you," said Evelyn.

"And sure it's herself that would be glad to see you here, my lady; for she often had a mind to write to you for us, only she did not like to be interfering."

"I will try to see her some other time," said Evelyn, who, seeing her father looking at his watch, bade farewell to the whole family, and after a longer visit than she had projected, and very much impressed by all she had seen, she left them.

"I think," said she, as they talked about it in their drive home, "that I never saw cleaner-looking children nor cabin, though so miserably poor; and it is very delightful to see them so kind to one another, and trying to be contented."

"I attribute it very much to the improvement they have received by reading the Bible," said Mr. Desmond. "There is nothing that tends more to civilise us in this life, at the same time that it enables us to look with hope to a better one. I have always observed that people are more civilised, and neat, and even industrious, in proportion as they are acquainted with the pure Gospel."

"How happy that good clergyman's wife must be at being able to promote the instruction and the comfort of the poor around her! and yet, I dare say, she is not rich."

"No; probably her whole year's income is less than your allowance for a single quarter; but I dare say she manages it judiciously, and, though generous, is never lavish."

CHAPTER LVII.

Desmonds go home — Conversation on useless Expenses — Luxury — Dress — Ornaments — Effect of laying aside Luxuries by which many are supported — Moderation in everything.

A FEW days after the drive to the Furzy hills Mr. Desmond and his family left Cromdarragh Castle and returned home. Their visit of nearly two months had been productive to Evelyn of as much improvement as pleasure. Her mind had opened; she had acquired a greater degree of control over herself, and, in thinking with more humility of her own importance, she had learned to defer more to the judgment of others.

No longer so reserved as when she and Mrs. Manvers had been first left together, Evelyn now felt at ease with her, and liked her conversation. Though she naturally regretted the society of the friends who had left her, she soon brightened up, and began to amuse herself in forming plans for winter occupations and pursuits, and was surprised at the many fresh objects for her activity and subjects for observation and study which, with the assistance of Mrs. Manvers, suggested themselves to her mind.

Mr. Carey, the under-agent, came in the middle of the week to inform her that, according to the directions given to him, he had set the workmen to lower the bed of the stream at the Furzy hills. After this was effected he would employ them on the drains, deep and narrow as Mr. Desmond had directed, and well stoned, to carry off the water held by the tenacious clay, and thereby correct the wet and rushy nature of the land. Evelyn derived so much pleasure from this useful outlay of money, that she wondered how she could have been satisfied with spending it on trifles which "contributed to nobody's advantage."

"Are you sure they do not?" said Mrs. Manvers.

"No," said Evelyn, "I am not at all sure of that; but I think they run away with a great deal of money."

"That is but too true. We must always recollect, however, that numbers of people are supported by the manufacture of those things which you call trifles, and who would be thrown out of bread were every one to become so wise as to refrain from using them."

"But might not the people who are now supported by such things find some other employment for their industry?"

"Not so easily as you imagine, for the different arts or trades that might supply other means of support have already as many hands employed as are required. Besides, the fingers, always accustomed to one kind of work, cannot so easily manage something quite different. But instead of discussing the subject in this abstract manner, let us apply the principle to some familiar example."

"Yes, I should like that; so let us take some particularly useless article," said Evelyn.

"You who object to the purchase of these useless things should name some one of them yourself; but you had better class them first."

"Very well: ornament is one very large class; amusement is another; dress another; and then all the luxuries of the table—I do not know under what name to class them."

"Your own word luxuries is a very suitable name for all the superfluities of dress or of the table. Now then come down to particulars. Ornament, with which you began, may be again subdivided. I suppose you mean ornaments for dress, for furniture, for the outside as well as the inside of our houses, for our gardens and equipages."

"To begin then with dress: I am sure, Mrs. Manvers, you will agree with me that it is not only useless but vulgar to be overdressed; then why not wear the simplest things? Why should we wear lace or satin or velvet or crape? I think people would respect me just as much if my dress were not trimmed with all this crape."

"Yes, just as much; perhaps more, if they thought that you dispensed with crape because you could not afford it, or

preferred giving the money it would cost in charity; and so they would in regard to anything else you might be unable to buy; but, knowing that you can afford both to do good and at the same time to be dressed suitably to your situation, it does not follow that they would respect you for appearing unlike your equals."

"But whether I should be respected or not," replied Evelyn, "I should withdraw that money which dress would have cost from what is useless, and I should have it to give to some poor deserving people."

"And suppose every one else chose to wear no more crape, what do you think would be the effect upon the crape-manufacturer?"

"He would manufacture something else."

"You do not consider, my dear, that the person who has been all his life weaving and dressing crape, most probably does not know how to do anything else, and then, even if he could employ himself otherwise, there is so much difficulty in getting into a new line of work, that he and his family might actually starve before they could obtain any employment."

"But I only spoke of giving up expensive things myself."

"Yes, Evelyn; but if you think it right to do so, others may think it right also, and then the manufacturer starves."

"It would be very hard, though, that I should buy crape when I do not want it," said Evelyn.

"Yes, certainly; but the few shillings saved in regard to a trifle like that are not worth your consideration, because you can afford to give money besides in charity, and that addition to your present dress is suitable, and therefore proper, as you can afford it; besides crape being, in your deep mourning, a necessary respect to the memory of your grandfather, from whom you derive your property."

"Well, I give up about the crape, Mrs. Manvers; but here is this jet brooch and my bracelets too and necklace, you will allow that they are unnecessary."

"The bracelets and necklace are so, I think," replied Mrs. Manvers, "and so are all the pretty little ornamental trifles made of that substance; but if every one refrained from buying them, what a blow it would be to the poor people at those

places where jet is found and prepared for sale! for on that their principal livelihood probably depends."

"Jet is a very pretty substance. Whereabouts is it found?"

"Jet is found abundantly on the coast of Yorkshire, particularly in the cliffs between Scarborough and Whitby, and numbers are supported by collecting and selling it."

"But we do not purchase these ornaments from the poor creatures who gather the material," said Evelyn.

"No; but the artificer who prepares the jet for sale would cease to purchase from those poor creatures who search for it when he found it was no longer bought from him, and for some time at least they would be distressed," replied Mrs. Manvers.

"But that must be the case in every change of fashion, and we should be obliged to adhere always to the same style of dress, or furniture, or manufacture, if that objection had any weight," said Evelyn.

"Large and general changes in the fashions or customs of mankind take place gradually, notwithstanding which they do very often produce a good deal of distress; for instance, a national mourning throws many industrious hands out of work, and, therefore, of late years, they have been wisely confined to the shortest periods consistent with propriety. But the question for us to consider is, how far our individual caprices may affect those who, link by link, are dependent upon our habits. When the market-gardener has gone to some expense in preparing early crops of fruit or vegetables for the supply of the rich, he would be ruined if there were not some extravagant people who were willing to waste their money on such luxuries."

"You approve then of that waste of money?"

"No, indeed—far from it; but it appears to me that in the present artificial state of society we can no longer expect that people should either dress or live in the simple style of the patriarchal ages; our dress and our luxuries are on the other hand the means of support to many; and, therefore, as millions of people live by supplying our taste for show and luxury, we should not incautiously, if we had the power, throw any class of artificers out of employment. These matters,

however, I think, are fortunately beyond the reach of our individual influence or interference, and, as far as our *worldly* duties are concerned, we shall not be very far wrong if we enjoy the comforts that our situations offer us, provided we do so with such moderation and prudence as always to preserve the means of relieving the distressed."

"Yes, to relieve the distressed surely should be our first duty," said Evelyn.

"But there is another duty," said Mrs. Manvers, "almost paramount to that—the *prevention* of distress. By giving employment at certain periods when labour is not in great demand, and sometimes by small loans of money to be repaid week by week, many a poor man's cow may be saved, and many a poor family preserved from breaking down, and much more extensive good may thus be effected than by merely giving alms."

"You will, however, allow that it cannot be wrong to give food and clothing to the miserable creatures that so often come here?" said Evelyn in a remonstrating voice.

"No one can object to cautious and judicious charity; but the pleasure of giving is a luxury, and should be indulged only in moderation. It is difficult to convince the generous—but it is the truth—that too profuse charity makes objects for itself, and really adds to the general misery by encouraging those who will not labour for their own support."

"What then am I to do? I cannot force them to work, and yet I cannot see them starve. Now, for instance, do you recollect that poor lame girl that came here some time ago? she can do nothing but plain work to support herself, and we had so little for her to do, that I sometimes gave her money. You would not call that a wrong charity?"

"No, not wrong, my dear Evelyn; but I should prefer encouraging her, or any one, to depend more on their own exertions, by instructing and giving them the means of earning their own support. Has she come or sent to you lately?"

"No, and I cannot imagine why she has not."

"I will tell you why. Having first inquired into the truth of her story, and finding that she did honestly wish to support herself, I taught her to do some nicer kind of

work, such as transferring satin-stitch from one material to another. She has practised on some collars of mine, and, though I paid her very moderately, she has earned enough to help her mother to buy a young pig—a *slip*, as the people call it—which she hopes to sell next spring with good profit. Now this has been gained by her own industry; and though the worked collars are only ornamental, and by no means necessary, yet I think they have been of more real service than if I had given her the money they have cost without requiring some kind of labour in return; and I find she is now likely to be employed by the daughters of the wealthy farmers in her neighbourhood.”

“You would approve then of my teaching that sort of work at my school instead of plain work?”

“How can you think so, Evelyn? It would be perfectly useless to most of the children, and besides they would be frequently out of employment, because there could not be a sufficient demand for ornamental work. I taught it to this poor girl because she did plain work already very neatly; and necessarily leading such a sedentary life, I thought it might be useful to vary her means of subsistence. But your school-children will, I hope, be taught every kind of useful needle-work—to make, and especially to *mend*, their own clothes, and those of their fathers and brothers.”

“Oh! yes, certainly. I see you are right; and I shall buy a large stock of materials for work and clothing, which will, I suppose, require a great outlay at first.”

“Then begin moderately the first quarter; you can buy a little more the next quarter; and I would advise you to employ the children in making clothes for the poor, to whom they may be sold at very low prices, and the sale of which will help to purchase more materials.”

“Moderation is the substance of all you have said to-day, dear Mrs. Manvers, and, I fear, one of the most difficult virtues to practise.”

“But it is also one of the most essential of our minor virtues, Evelyn. Moderate expenditure in your dress and furniture—in your garden and other fancies—will enable you, much more than by giving them up completely, to do your part in the

social system. While we do all we can to promote the wholesome and honest employment of the working classes, we do them far more effectual service than by giving them money and teaching them to be beggars."

"It requires a vast deal of reflection and self-command," replied Evelyn, "to be moderate in all things."

CHAPTER LVIII.

Psalm xxiv. — Object of the Psalm — The Ark carried up Mount Zion a Type of the Ascension of Our Lord.

“Now, my dear Mrs. Manvers, let me remind you of your promise of reading with me the twenty-fourth Psalm.”

“Most willingly. Being one of those appointed for Ascension Day it claims our particular attention, as indeed do all those selected for the church service at our festivals.”

“And yet,” said Evelyn, “though the language seems to be singularly impressive and beautiful, I do not exactly know what was the particular object of this Psalm.”

“It is commonly supposed to have been prepared by David previous to the removal of the ark to Mount Zion. Some commentators even venture to infer that this sublime chant burst from the assembled multitude just as the ark arrived at the summit of the mountain, and at the door of the holy place provided for its reception.”

“I think,” said Evelyn, “it appears to be only a hymn of praise.”

“It is somewhat more,” replied Mrs. Manvers; “it is one of those hymns of thanksgiving which were sung by the Jews when any great event was to be celebrated with peculiar solemnity and devout rejoicings.”

“It is a beautiful composition, whatever the object may have been,” Evelyn remarked.

“It is indeed,” said Mrs. Manvers. “The opening verses are an acknowledgment of the supreme and infinite dominion of the Lord of all things in heaven and earth. Next comes the inquiry—Who are the acceptable worshippers that are fit to stand in that holy place? The awful response seems to expand into the prediction of the triumphant reception of the Saviour in heaven, at the close of his visit to this world. From

this you will perceive that the ascension of our Lord is here typified by the conveying of the ark up Mount Zion, while the magnificent climax in the last four verses of this fine Psalm applies directly to the entrance into heaven of the King of Glory."

"It is plain then that this Psalm may be included among those which are considered prophetic of the Messiah."

"Certainly—and that the particular object of this majestic poem, Evelyn, was not only to record the ascent of the sacred ark to Mount Zion, but to shadow forth that greater and more sublime event, the ascent of the Messiah into heaven."

"So that the ascension of our Lord was here prefigured by a type."

"Yes; many circumstances attending our Lord's ministry on earth were described by types, as well as foretold by express declarations. Indeed the whole of the Mosaic ritual, and a large portion of the history of Israel, are supposed to exhibit a figurative and prophetic representation of the great plan of salvation by Jesus Christ."

"It would be a useful study for me, I think, to find out and understand all those types."

"Yes, Evelyn, and with some attention you may perceive that many places and ceremonies were emblematic; more particularly the ark, which accompanied the Israelites, which led their movements throughout the journey to the land of Canaan, and which was at length deposited in the temple at Jerusalem. It was the chosen symbol of the Messiah, the token of the divine presence, and the medium of intercourse with Jehovah. Passing from the ark to the object figuratively represented, this psalm, as you see, rises above the type, and celebrates the restoration of the Messiah himself to his heavenly glory."

"How beautifully," Evelyn exclaimed, "the transition from the one object to the other is expressed in this remarkable Psalm, which is yet in itself one connected poem!"

"It may be said to have three distinct objects, but all connected, as you remark. First, it proclaims the dominion of God—'The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein.' That part is supposed to

have been sung while the procession advanced in its ascent up Mount Zion."

"And the second part, I see," said Evelyn, "inquires whether acceptable worshippers could be found 'who shall stand in his holy place'—what kind of character will be received—who is he that can be admitted to the holy place and receive the blessings of God through the holy ordinances of the tabernacle."

"You are right; that is the subject of the second part—a part that we ought not to pass lightly over, for it deeply concerns us. These are questions which we should do well to put to ourselves whenever we enter a place of worship; and not then only, but at all times, my dear, let us ask ourselves—Are the thoughts of our hearts such as to entitle us to the high privilege of appearing in this holy place?"

"The answer is distinct, but who can dare to apply it to themselves?" said Evelyn. "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

"True, it is a fearful reflection; but, my dear young friend, let us remember that it is not from any excellency of our own that we can be admitted, but from that high and heavenly grace which is always ready to assist our endeavours when they are sincere. The third part of the primary sense is obviously applicable to the entrance of the ark into the tabernacle; but when taken as the supposed demand for the admission of the triumphant Saviour, the lofty language in which it is expressed seems every way suitable to the dignity and grandeur of the occasion."

CHAPTER LIX.

The poor Weaver — Good-nature of his Neighbours — Evelyn sends Relief — Conversation on real Charity — Providing Fishing-Nets — Charity of the Poor to each other.

WHEN Mrs. Manvers and Evelyn were out walking one day they met a poor man who appeared in great distress; haggard, worn, and yellow, his countenance showed plainly that he had suffered from illness in addition to poverty. Accosting Evelyn, he told her a sad tale of the illness of his family, and of his total want of support for those who were recovering, or of medicines for those who were ill.

Evelyn had forgotten her purse at home; and in a whisper asked Mrs. Manvers to lend her a sovereign. Taking her apart, she replied,

“I have not one about me: but is it possible that you would give so much at once without first inquiring into the truth of this poor man’s account, or learning in what manner he and his family can best be assisted?”

“And would you have me refuse him any help till I had made a string of inquiries, while, in the mean time, his children are literally dying of hunger?”

“No, do not mistake me; I would only advise you to give moderately now, and reserve the power of doing more afterwards if you find that he deserves further aid. At all events I can lend you only a few shillings now. Ask him where he lives; and we can easily send or take more help to him.”

Evelyn eagerly took the money, vexed at having kept the poor man in suspense, and, putting it into his hand, inquired where his cabin lay. But he could not answer her at first, he was so overcome with joy and gratitude at the sight of her donation. At length he told her, in the midst of his heartfelt blessings and prayers, where his family were to be found; and

it was a relief to her mind to learn that they were not on any part of her land. The place, however, was not far off, and she proposed to Mrs. Manvers to go with her at once to see them : they did go ; and had she not gone to the cabin she could not have had an idea of the destitute state of misery and filth in which she found this wretched family. Their furniture had been seized and sold by their landlord, who was himself little more than a pauper. They were lying on dirty straw on the ground, with only an old cloak to cover them ; the mother lay with her parched mouth open, asking perpetually for some water ; one child seemed too ill to speak, another was crying for food, and a third, half naked, was shivering near a few burning sticks, on which an iron pot was placed. From time to time an old woman stirred the boiling pot, gave drink to the sick woman, and tried to quiet the uneasy children.

After the usual greeting, " God save you !" Mrs. Manvers asked the old woman about the poor people who were so ill ; and learned that, though her countenance was forbidding, and that she appeared as poor as the family, she had brought a little oatmeal out of her own pittance, and was then making gruel for these poor destitute people. Day after day, she told them, one or other of the neighbours had contributed to their support, till at last the sick man had gained sufficient strength to go out begging ; and now it was to be hoped all were mending and would recover—" now that they have been noticed by your ladyship," said the old woman to Evelyn ; " but indeed, honey, you had better not stop in the cabin, lest you should take the fever."

" I do not feel in the least degree afraid of that," replied Evelyn ; " but I think, Mrs. Manvers, we had better return home, for the sooner I get home the sooner I can send relief to them." She then asked how they had supported themselves before the distress caused by their illness had occurred. The old woman said that the sick man had been an industrious weaver formerly, making linen and other homespun manufacture ; but every year his employment grew less and less profitable ; for the women in the neighbourhood had become so newfangled with the cheap cotton goods which pedlers brought from England, that they ceased to spin ; few, therefore, now

employed him. He tried for field-work, but could not get any; one by one all their articles of clothing had been pledged, and, last of all, the loom; and the hardness of his landlord, who was himself but an under-tenant, crowned his misery. "He has a rood of potatoes, too, still in the ground," said the poor old woman with tears in her eyes, "but he won't be let dig them till he pays the rint; and now if he had his loom he'd get work, I think, for some of the neighbours have begun again to have flax, because they are tired of the cotton, it is such bad stuff; and now the quality's come to live here again, may be they'd give him work, or buy linsey-woolsey from him."

Evelyn did not understand all of the old woman's long speech, but contented herself with inquiring what the potato-rent was, and where the loom was to be found, knowing that Mrs. Manvers would explain all the rest to her.

She and Mrs. Manvers hastened home, and in a short time collected blankets and linen, some broth and bread, barley to make drink for the sick, and many little comforts, particularly some fresh straw, and all were quickly despatched in a little donkey-cart, and directions were given to Mr. Hickey, the steward, to pay the potato-rent, that no time might be lost in digging them while the weather was favourable.

In the evening, as they sat at tea, Mrs. Manvers remarked that Evelyn must be glad her sovereign had not been given hastily in the morning, as she might now employ it better.

"Better, Mrs. Manvers! could it have been better employed than in relieving such distress, and that so patiently borne? I really imagined that you would have approved of my helping this poor family."

"Yes, Evelyn, I do very much; but I think that, instead of merely giving money now, you may do more good by trying to set the man at work once more. If you redeem his loom and bespeak some linen from him, and perhaps advance a few shillings to buy the yarn, you will do him more real good, it appears to me, than you would have done by your gift of a sovereign now."

"Oh, yes!" said Evelyn, pleased with the suggestion; "it would be a great delight to me to set up this poor weaver

again with his loom and his yarn, and to have some linen made here, but still I do not understand anything about those affairs."

"It will be a good opportunity then to learn what may be of infinite service to you, living as you are among your poor tenantry. It requires some skill to be usefully charitable; but in the present case nothing can be more simple. In order not to lose time unnecessarily, your active and good-natured Mrs. Jane can easily have the yarn bought; and when the man is able to weave and has recovered his loom, you will give him the material, and pay him when it is woven—which cannot be much trouble. Or, perhaps, he is better used to making that excellent mixture of thread and wool called linsey-wolsey; and if you employ him in making a whole piece of it, you can have the additional pleasure of distributing it amongst many poor people afterwards."

"Oh! I recollect now that is what the old woman spoke of. We do not know the proportions to buy of the two materials, and it would be troublesome to manage about it; yet I like the scheme, and will certainly follow your advice; it is exactly what you recommended a few days ago—preventing distress as well as relieving it."

"Just to show what may be done by steady and prudent exertion, I will tell you an interesting circumstance which I know to be fact:—Some young ladies who went to reside near the sea-side in another part of Ireland found that among numerous applications for charity the greatest number were from the families of fishermen. On inquiring into the cause of their poverty, it was found that some had bad worn-out nets, nearly good for nothing, and, having large families to support, they were too poor to buy new ones, so that even in the most favourable weather they could earn but little; the old fishermen too, no longer able to take their part in their daily calling, and having no employment by which they could support themselves, were a burden on those to whom they belonged, and the consequent distress was at times severe. These young ladies, not having much experience, sent to a neighbouring seaport for several nets, on which they laid out a good deal of money; but the person they employed to pro-

cure them bought half-worn nets, which soon became bad. In a short time the poor fishermen had to complain again that half their time was spent in mending them; so these excellent and now more prudent ladies thought of a better scheme—one which would ensure good nets, and give employment to three different sets of people."

"Pray tell it then exactly," said Evelyn; "perhaps in some way I might imitate them."

"They bought raw hemp—I mean, not spun—and employed the poor women in their neighbourhood to spin it into strong yarn fit for the sort of twine of which fishing-nets are made; it was then twisted into twine of two or three strands, according to the kind required; but they had some trouble before the women learned to do all this in the proper way. When it was all rightly prepared, the old fishermen were employed to make it into nets, which they all knew how to do. I have frequently seen them netting with a very coarse needle filled with twine, and using their thumb, to form the stitch, instead of a netting-pin. At length the new nets were made, and the young ladies sold them at a very moderate price to those who wanted them, receiving the payment in small instalments."

"Sold them!" exclaimed Evelyn; "oh, how shabby and paltry!"

"Stop, my dear; do not judge too quickly. One good *take* of fish with the new nets would have enabled the fishermen to pay the full price at once; but they only paid it by instalments, which was, you will allow, a very great relief to such poor people: and as to selling them, I assure you experience has shown that the poor value much more what they pay for than what they receive as charity, and take care of it accordingly."

"Well; and how has the business gone on?"

"Exceedingly well. The nets, being made of good home-spun hemp, are remarkably strong, and their excellence is so well known now, that all the neighbouring fishermen are glad to buy them at their full price, so there is a constant, well-established manufacture and traffic going on: the women spin, the old men net and support themselves, the fishermen

buy, and, no longer deceived by unsound nets, have their excellent fish always ready for their customers. Thus, you see, those young ladies, by combining their charity with prudence, have the delightful and lasting gratification of having preserved numbers of industrious people from distress by ensuring to them the means of pursuing their healthy and honest vocations. They are amply repaid by those feelings for their risk and exertions, which were known only to a few friends, ultimately costing them but little, and all effected without the smallest ostentation."

"It was, indeed, a noble work, and must have required equal energy and patience. Thank you for explaining the whole process. I see money will go twice as far in charity by good management. But, Mrs. Manvers, I was surprised to see the kindness and good-nature of their poor neighbours to those who are sick, for I remember hearing it said that the Irish were hard and uncharitable to each other."

"I am sure you never heard your good grandfather say so. All who know them well, know that as long as they have a morsel of food they will share it with those who are in want. You may often observe a poor old man going along the road with a little wallet of meal or potatoes on his back—gifts to him from many who have perhaps but little to spare; and he again is ready to share what he has collected with any poor hungry wanderer more wretched than himself."

"How much the Irish character is mistaken in England!" said Evelyn; "but indeed people are inconsistent in what they say, for the hospitality of the Irish is spoken of at the same time that they are accused of being deficient in charity."

"Yes," said Mrs. Manvers, "because travellers do not mix enough with the poor to witness those small acts of benevolence, which are much greater in proportion than the charity of the rich; though, as strangers, they readily acknowledge the hospitality for which this country has become proverbial. Indeed, in ancient times hospitality was so indispensable a part of the habits of Ireland, that laws were made by the national council for its due regulation. Houses of hospitality, called *beatachs*, were established everywhere,

the masters of which ranked high. The spirit of this hospitality is even to this day kept up. In Munster, and still more in Connaught, the houses of all classes of the gentry, and even of the most humble inhabitants, are open to all poor strangers. As soon as one enters and places himself by the fire, the people of the house treat him as one of the family, and he really feels himself such, and rises to welcome the next comer."

CHAPTER LX.

Conversation on History — Antiquities and Ancient Customs confirm the Truth of History — Lycian Cottage — Ossian — The Chain of Silence.

“ You seem to be well acquainted with history,” said Evelyn to Mrs. Manvers, as she turned over the pages of an old folio in the library ; “ you must have read with interest and care.”

“ Yes,” said Mrs. Manvers, “ to a certain degree I may say that I have studied it : without study, or, at least, a fair proportion of labour, no knowledge can be acquired. But my chief object was to gain a general view of the great changes by which the different periods of time are distinguished, and a knowledge of the remarkable characters that each period brought forth, as well as the circumstances which seemed to have produced them.”

“ For my part, I like best reading about those times that are called heroic. I used to read parts of the Iliad and the Odyssey to my grandfather, and he often pointed out to me such interesting passages of ancient history, that I acquired a real love for it. Indeed, I read the history of Greece and Rome, and a large portion of the ‘ Universal History,’ much more as an amusement than as a lesson, it was so entertaining ; and I delighted in Ossian, though I did not always understand it.”

“ Yes, when once the interest is excited, and that the reader is anxious to trace the progress or the consequences of any event, history no longer appears dry or tiresome. Some great leading facts then become fixed in our minds, as points to which we can refer in considering the dates of circumstances, whether early or subsequent ; not only for the connexion of dates, but for the light they throw on each other ; we perceive

their influence on the manners and customs of mankind, and the changes that they have produced."

"I am afraid I have never taken such an extended view of history," replied Evelyn. "I have generally paid more attention to the great achievements of the heroes of those times than to their consequences. I must confess that one reason why I read ancient history with so much more pleasure than modern is that it carries me on through all its great events—invasions, battles, sieges, conquests, and heroic struggles—without so many reflections, or so much dry particular minutiae, as we find in modern history."

"But then, on the other hand," replied Mrs. Manvers, "if the great end of history is to teach us by example, it is in those very reflections, if justly made, that we are to look for great part of its value; but, besides that, we have a better chance of truth in modern history, because the assertions of one author are checked by so many contemporary narratives. As to the stories of Themistocles, Lysurgus, Miltiades, Pericles, and so forth, they are very delightful and really exciting, but we must always feel somewhat doubtful as to their real precision."

"Doubtful as to the precision of the dates which are given to them, perhaps, but not, I hope, Mrs. Manvers, as to the persons themselves having lived and distinguished themselves as we read. I cannot see why some of the records of ages 'long gone by' may not be considered as facts which have been carefully preserved and authenticated. Why do people like to doubt the historians of past times?"

"I think mankind are too often disposed to doubt the accuracy of history," replied Mrs. Manvers; "but the habit of doubting is unwise, and so also is the inclination to question the authenticity of the leading facts of ancient history, for we may thus be led to have no confidence in the most venerable records."

"Besides," said Evelyn, "many remarkable events of past ages are confirmed by the details of various authors; and surely that is a great proof of their truth."

"Yes, if they were contemporary authors; but you might more justly have said that the antiquities still remaining—

the temples, the theatres, and all the reliques of former greatness—at once demonstrate the former power and opulence of many nations now fallen into decay; and that, therefore, the narratives which are in some measure identified with those standing memorials must be really correct in the main, though perhaps in some degree embellished and exaggerated. Another strong confirmation is to be found, I think, in the remains of ancient manners and peculiar customs. Many of those mentioned by the early historians are found by our modern travellers even to this day unchanged.”

“I wish you would mention some of them,” said Evelyn; “it is so satisfactory to find facts corroborated by accident.”

“Yes, by ‘undesigned proofs,’ as some author calls them. In Maundrell, and in various Eastern travels, especially in Dr. Robinson’s recent and excellent account of Palestine, you may find instances of the similarity of the present and past customs of the East. I recollect finding a small but remarkable instance in Mure’s entertaining ‘Tour in Greece.’ He first proves, very satisfactorily, that Homer’s description of ancient Ithaca is in all respects applicable to the modern Theaki, one of the Ionian islands; and shows how truly many of Homer’s descriptions of places and manners correspond with those of this day. He says that, among the numerous points of resemblance between the habits of rural life in Greece now and those of former times, there are few more striking than that of the shepherds’ encampments, scattered here and there over the less cultivated districts, with those so frequently described by Homer. I dare say you recollect the passage in the fourteenth book of the Odyssey, where Ulysses, disguised as a beggar, approaches the farm of a swineherd, and is fiercely assaulted by the dogs, but delivered by the interference of their master.”

“O, yes, I remember it well; I have often heard grand-papa repeat those lines.”

“Well, Mr. Mure says he witnessed the exact counterpart of that adventure of the disguised hero. A friend of his, overtaken by the dark, sought refuge at a farm-house: as he approached, the dogs rushed upon him, and, being rescued by ‘the Eumæus of the fold,’ he was told by him that he ought to

have stopped and sat down, and have laid aside his stick, till some one came to his relief. If he had seated himself on the ground, the dogs, he was assured, would have sat round him in a circle, and, unless he moved, would not have renewed their attack. Mure says this was told him without the least reference to the classic narrative, but it threw a full light on those lines :—

Soon as Ulysses near the enclosure drew,
With open mouths the furious mastiffs flew ;
Down sat the sage, and, cautious to withstand,
Let fall the offensive truncheon from his hand."

" I recollect," said Evelyn, " that I used to wonder why Ulysses threw away his only means of defence ; but now I perceive, by this charming explanation, that it was the custom then to trust to canine honour. It is, however, very curious to find those ancient customs still remaining in some places, and yet entirely changed in others."

" It is in the lonely and unfrequented countries, which attract neither the spirit of traffic nor of adventure, that we see the same customs, manners, and even architecture, continue from one generation to another. Sir Charles Fellows, for instance, in his interesting account of Lycia, says, the huts of the Greek and Turkish population are still built in somewhat of the same form as their ancient temples. The roof is flat, and, being made of earth, a roller is kept on each house-top, which, by pressing the clay well together and keeping it level, makes it water-tight. This roof is supported by columns like posts or stems of trees, standing on large stones, which form as it were bases, and prevent the posts from sinking into the earth. On the tops of these posts are placed blocks of wood resembling architectural capitals ; on them rest the long beam, which may be compared to the frieze ; and along the edge of the wall may be seen the projecting ends of the cross-rafters which support the roof, and which have exactly the appearance of the modillions of an Ionic cornice. Thus in those humble huts may be perceived the rude origin of that beautiful Grecian architecture, which will in all ages be admired."

" How delightful," said Evelyn, " to be able thus to trace

such an art up to the first steps, and to compare the little Lycian cottage with one of the mighty temples of Greece and Rome ! But that leads my thoughts back to history, which is rendered doubly attractive by the antiquities that are, as you remarked, so many proofs of its truth. How magnificent were the works of those two great nations ! I do love to read and study the noble deeds which distinguished the ancient Greeks and Romans ! How often I wish that we could look back in the same manner to the olden times in Ireland, and find more in its early history than incessant civil wars !”

“ The same objects, Evelyn, appear very different when seen through different mediums,” returned Mrs. Manvers : “ we forget, that Greece, too, consisted of a number of petty states ; and while we read with lively interest the accounts of their ceaseless contentions and mutual struggles, as detailed by their historians and poets, we are perversely disinclined to study those of Ireland, and its various kingdoms.”

“ I suppose,” said Evelyn, “ the reason most people are so indifferent about the early time of Ireland is, that its histories have not been well impressed on our minds by poetry and polished writers, like those of Greece and Rome.”

“ You should know, then,” said Mrs. Manvers, “ that there are several very beautiful songs and heroic poems in Irish : this country, though harassed by war, and her records plundered by invaders, has still preserved many of those original productions, some of which have been well translated. A beautiful but too small collection of poems was translated and published many years since by Miss Brooke.”

“ How very much I should like to see that book !” said Evelyn ; “ but perhaps it is in this library. I do not yet know half the treasures it contains ; I must search for it.”

“ There is a large number of Irish manuscripts still to be translated, which would be of great value to both historians and antiquaries,” replied Mrs. Manvers ; “ and I am sure there are numerous poems, not printed nor indeed written, but only in the minds of some old people, which I fear are fast fading away from the memory of those to whom they have descended by tradition. It would be very desirable to collect and translate them into the simplest prose. Their

structure, and broken starts of passion, and their irregular wildness, are very striking, and prove incontestably that they are ancient and original compositions."

"That is much to be wished, indeed!" exclaimed Evelyn; "but of those already published I should like to see some specimens in the mean time."

"Possibly we may find some in the library: but the translations which have been published are of very unequal merit. I have read some which breathe the true spirit of poetry, and which appear to be faithful representations of the manners and sentiments of the periods when they were composed."

"How does it happen that they are so little known?" said Evelyn.

"Several circumstances have conspired to cause the general ignorance of Irish poetry," replied Mrs. Manvers. "The principal one was, I think, the unwise endeavour to put down the Irish language altogether, in the hope of sooner civilising the people; but I am convinced that object would have been better attained if their language had been preserved and restored to its purity. I need only mention Ossian, to show what we might have had; for in all its essential parts that poem was originally Irish, though first collected in the highlands of Scotland."

"You believe, then, in the authenticity of Ossian: I am glad of it; grandpapa did so too. He often repeated some of its beautiful passages; and I remember his saying that parts of it were still sung or repeated by the people in its original language."

"Yes, that is the case certainly in those parts of Ireland where Irish only is spoken; and as many portions of those poems are still current there, the originality of their language can scarcely be doubted. I assure you I have been informed by people who know the language, that, to this day, long and interesting passages of Ossian are still recited in the west of this country. The parts that are best remembered are those which relate the deeds of their heroes, whose sense of honour was so acute, that to outlive a general defeat, or exist after the loss of a diadem, was to entail indelible disgrace on their families. 'Glory is preferable to life' was the favourite

maxim of princes, knights, and chieftains, in former times; and one single instance only is recorded of a prince surviving the loss of his crown; it occurred in the eleventh century, and, being noted as an only instance, blazons the more highly the national character and bravery of the noble spirits of those days."

"Yes, dear Mrs. Manvers, it is those anecdotes of the glorious chiefs of ancient times that give the real zest to history."

"Well, I will tell you one which marks a strong sense of honour. When it was proposed in a council of war that Con, the King of Connaught, should surprise the unwary enemy that night, his brave general, Goll MacMorni,—

‘High-minded Goll, whose daring soul
Stoops not to any chief’s control,’—

boldly protested against such a dishonourable deed, exclaiming—‘On the day that arms were first put into my hands, I solemnly vowed never to attack an enemy at night, or by surprise, or at any kind of disadvantage; to this day I have strictly adhered to this promise, nor will I break it now.’"

"Oh, what a truly brave man!" exclaimed Evelyn. "Oh, that that high sense of honour were still preserved; when did it happen?"

"That circumstance took place in the second century, at the battle of Magh Lena, where Eugene the Great, the King of Munster, fell. His body, pierced by a thousand wounds, was raised on the shoulders of his enemies and brought to Goll, their general—the same Goll who adhered so exactly to his vow. Shocked at the indignity to so brave a monarch, Goll instantly cried out—‘Lay down the body of the King of Munster, for he died as should a hero!’"

"How noble!" exclaimed Evelyn. "I hope you have other sayings of that generous-minded hero."

"You shall have a trait which will show that even his fiery spirit could be controlled. At one time there was a great contention between him and Finn, the famous chieftain whose glorious deeds as Fingal are celebrated by his son Ossian.

Each was at the head of his own army ; and their fierce contention was for precedence !”

“ What an insignificant cause of strife for the really great !” exclaimed Evelyn.

“ The attending bards of both parties,” continued Mrs. Manvers, “ apprehensive of the consequences, determined to interfere with their united influence. They first shook the ‘ Chain of Silence,’ then seizing their harps, and raising their voices, they flung themselves in pairs among the ranks, extolling in equal measures the achievements of the ancestors of both the haughty rivals ; and such was the power of music and poetry, that both immediately laid down their arms, listened with mute attention to the lays of their bards, and rewarded them with precious gifts.”

“ But what do you mean, Mrs. Manvers, by the Chain of Silence ?”

“ I was puzzled long ago by that expression,” said Mrs. Manvers, “ which I met with in Miss Brooke’s account of the contention between Goll* and Finn ; lately, however, a friend, who is master of Irish literature, was so obliging as to send me a translation he had made of a passage which he had found in a very scarce Irish manuscript, purchased by the Royal Irish Academy. I have it here in my writing-box, and will read it to you :—‘ There was a certain powerful chieftain, in whose *dun*, or house, were three chains. One of these was of gold, another of silver, and the third was of bronze. It was by the sounding of these chains they called to silence the people of the household. Thus, when they were about to dine, the golden chain was rung ; and then no one spoke in the *dun*, or *doon*, as it is pronounced, except the stewards and necessary attendants. When music was to be introduced the silver chain was rung, and then no one might speak but the musicians and singers.”

“ Such a chain might certainly be of great use at musical parties,” said Evelyn, “ where I have been told it is difficult to command silence and attention. But the third chain, on what occasion was that used ?”

“ The third chain was rung on the arrival of some chief or

* Or Gaul, as Miss Brooke spells his name.

champion at the dun, in order to enforce silence while the guest was relating his history and adventures."

"Thank you, Mrs. Manvers, for these three Chains: a chain was, I suppose, considered a fit emblem of control, and the different tones, according to the occasion, was a happy device. To make the story complete we should know what the bards said to those two jealous warriors."

"I think I can repeat two or three stanzas, but I advise you to read the whole in Miss Brooke's 'Reliques of Irish Poetry,' which I think is in the library:—

'Finn of the flowing locks, O hear my voice!

No more with Goll contend!

Be peace henceforth thy happy choice,

And gain a valiant friend.

Did all the hosts of all the earth unite,

From pole to pole, from wave to wave,

Exulting in their might,

His is that monarchy of soul,

To fit him for a wide control,

The empire of the brave!

Hear, O Goll! the poet's voice!

O, be peace thy gen'rous choice!

Yield thee to the bard's desire!

Calm the terror of thine ire!

Cease we here our mutual strife,

And peaceful be our future life!"

CHAPTER LXI.

Sketches of Mrs. Manvers' Life — Field of Battle — Search for the wounded — Gibraltar — Recent Rock — The Ape and Sentinel.

EVELYN had been playing some Irish melodies on the piano-forte one evening, and, finishing with the most plaintive of her old favourites, went to make tea, when Mrs. Manvers said, with a low voice and tearful eyes—"How true it is that there is in souls a sympathy with sounds! As Cowper says, 'Wherever I have heard a kindred melody the scene recurs, and with it all its pleasures and its pains.'"

"Ah, Mrs. Manvers, we have made but little progress in your life and adventures, of which you have yet given me only a few circumstances."

"It has been a devious path, Evelyn, varied with good and ill; yet I may say truly, in continuation of those beautiful lines of Cowper's—

'That in a few short moments I retrace
(As in a map the voyager his course)
The windings of my way through many years.
Short as in retrospect the journey seems,
It seem'd not always short; the rugged path,
In prospect oft so dreary and forlorn,
Moved many a sigh at its disheartening length.'"

"Perhaps I ought not to press you—it may be too painful—forgive my thoughtlessness."

"All the particulars of my life it would be now impossible to relate to you, dear Evelyn. Some circumstances may not be disclosed, and to some it would be painful to recur—they are yet too fresh in my heart. Many of our misfortunes are the result of our own perverseness and self-willedness, and in that case we may justly murmur not at them indeed, but at our own folly. When I married I thought, like a child, that I was to enjoy unclouded happiness; but who in this imperfect world ever

did? My own parents, as well as those dear friends with whom I lived, had endeavoured, before it was too late, to convince me that my choice was imprudent, and that neither a military life nor the character of Captain Manvers was suited to me; but I attributed their opinions to prejudice, and, though I had hitherto deferred always to their judgment, I now obstinately resolved to abide by my own choice, and even refused to delay a marriage which they were too indulgent to forbid. Could I expect that my marriage made under such circumstances would be blessed? Not long after the Rebellion ceased I was married. I left all my kind and tender friends with a light heart, and went to Captain Manvers' quarters in the country, and from thence to the West Indies, and after some years to the Peninsula.

"There is much discomfort, the particulars of which I will not detail, in such a life even during peace, but the anxieties and miseries of war, whether a wife accompany her husband or remain at home, are equally harassing.

"Poor Captain Manvers, though remarkably gentle in his manners, was imprudent and brave even to rashness in the field, and foremost in every dangerous exploit, sometimes even venturing to exceed the orders of his commanding officer.

"Aware of his disposition, I felt that I had double cause for anxious dread, and my perpetual anxiety, though produced by affection, I am sure often tormented him; however, I was sometimes of use. There was one great battle—I almost shudder even now at the recollection of its horrors—where we won a desperate victory, and our bravest men lay heaped upon the plain. I need not tell you all I suffered while in suspense; at last I heard the shout of victory, but my husband did not return. I saw many wounded officers borne home, but he was not one of them. For some time I had not courage to inquire for him; but at length I asked a goodnatured-looking soldier of our own regiment, who was assisting another wounded man. 'Oh! Madam,' he simply replied, and his eyes filled as he spoke, 'the captain lies among the best of our men—all dead.'"

"I instantly seized a lantern from some one who passed me, for it was already dark, and hastened to a scene of horror and anguish such as I could not have imagined. I cannot

tell how I had strength to pass on among the slain, or sense to direct me; but I rambled on, watching for our own uniform, and holding the light to every face that seemed like Frederick's. At last I came to a number of our own men lying together, and then, for a moment, my courage failed. I stopped; and losing all hope that he was alive, I hesitated what to do, and felt as if I could die there also. But my weakness soon yielding to stronger and better feelings, I sought among them carefully, in the conviction that where they lay there must be their captain: and there, indeed, did I discover him—and still alive! He had bled so profusely that he was too much exhausted to speak, and had consequently been thought dead.

“The exclamation which broke from me roused him so far that he opened his eyes for a moment, and I saw him faintly smile. But what was to be done? No one was near me but those wretches who come to rob the dead and the dying! how to procure assistance was my great difficulty. I could not leave him. I determined to wait, in the hope of some kind person approaching; and in the mean time, rolling up my handkerchief so as to apply a pressure to the principal wound, I tied my shawl tightly round, and succeeded in stanching the blood. He smiled again; and as my hopes began to rise, my strength increased, and I contrived to raise him a little, and to separate him from the bodies of the dead which had fallen upon him. He spoke at last just the words, ‘Bless you!’ then lay back as if dying. I could do nothing but pray; and I did indeed fervently pray to Heaven for mercy and for aid. The rain poured on us in torrents. Every instant would, I thought, be the last to my poor unfortunate husband, cut off, as I feared, in all the thoughtlessness of youth. I dreaded lest the savage plunderers who were hovering near us should put an end to the small remnant of life that he still retained; but I determined to defend him, resolving they should first destroy me. I disengaged his sword as gently as I could from his hand, in which it was still grasped, and I prepared to protect him from any attack. An hour—a dreadful hour passed in this state; and at length I had nearly sunk under the pressure of grief and terror,

when, to my inexpressible relief, I heard my name repeated several times, as if some one was trying to discover me. I screamed aloud with grateful joy, and in a few moments one of our officers and a few soldiers were at my side. Too faint to move, I could only exclaim, 'Oh! thank God!—he is alive! save him—save him!'

"They carried us both home. A surgeon was soon brought, and the ball extracted; but other wounds, particularly one in his side where the ball could not be found, were then discovered, and his state seemed to me hopeless.

"Frederick had lain for hours bleeding on the ground, and the surgeon assured me that the profuse bleeding had saved his life. It is unnecessary to enter into the details of his slow recovery; but at length he was restored to me, and often did he repeat that to me he owed his life. And oh! how fervently did I thank Heaven for the courage and strength granted to me! and how gratefully did I feel that I had been guided by a gracious Providence!"

"Oh, Mrs. Manvers! what dreadful misery and anxiety you must have felt! I wonder you were not quite overpowered by all you went through! And did Captain Manvers recover perfectly from his wounds after all your exertions for him?"

"From all but that one in his side, which continued troublesome for a long time, and incapacitated him for service, as the ball could not be found, nor the wound healed. We were sent in a transport to the hospital at Gibraltar, and remained there to his great mortification during the rest of that year's campaign.

"At last, his health being restored, he looked forward to new scenes of glory—and I, to new anxieties and horrors for the ensuing spring. Not but that, in the midst of all the dread I had felt on his account, in battle or in skirmish, a certain degree of martial spirit had grown up within me, and I could sometimes half exclaim, even with some enthusiasm, 'Go where glory waits thee!'"

"How did you like your residence at Gibraltar? Living on a bare rock must have been very uncomfortable, though quite new to you."

"There was, indeed, much novelty in the place, though I could enjoy it but little while nursing my husband; but we read together Drinkwater's history of the siege; and, when he was able, we traced with much interest the various spots mentioned there,—especially the famous gallery and batteries excavated in the solid rock. We went also to the northern extremity of the rock to see, what I thought very curious, the recently formed stone,—a sort of breccia, which is found in some of its perpendicular fissures. It appears that a number of hawks made their nests on the ledges of the rock, and having thrown down from their nests the bones of small birds, mice, and any other animals on which they feed, those bones gradually became united into a breccia along with the fragments of the decomposing limestone and a cement of red earth."

"What an interesting geological study to see stones so recently formed! Is that formation peculiar to Gibraltar?" Evelyn asked.

"No, no: there are numerous instances of the same circumstance in several caverns in England and on the Continent, in which the deposits of mud and sand have become thus cemented together, with bones, or shells, or other substances, along with limestone, so as to form one compact mass."

"Even on that bare rock, then, you found objects to attract your attention; but is there not a curious cave at Gibraltar?"

"There is a curious and very large cave there, but I saw its entrance only, for Captain Manvers was unwilling to allow me to accompany a party who went to explore it, as he was unable to come with me. You may be assured that there are few places where something to observe may not be found. I was sometimes much amused in watching the large black apes, when the wind was blowing hard from the eastward, creeping a little way down the western face of the mountain for shelter, and carrying their little ones on their backs or in their arms; but always appearing in the steepest and most inaccessible spots."

"I remember seeing," said Evelyn, "in Krapft and Isenberg's account of their mission to Abyssinia, that in one of their journeys a flock of baboons were observed near the way side

marching in excellent order, with some of the larger ones walking in front and rear of each line, evidently in imitation of a party of soldiers who had joined the missionary in the journey, and occasionally halting and gazing at the strangers. Did your apes, Mrs. Manvers, ever come down the hill and imitate the soldiers when they were on parade?"

"Oh, no; they were much too wary to venture far from their rocky fastnesses, which few people could clamber up. Numbers of laughable stories have been related of their former exploits; but from all I saw and heard while I was there, I believe there was very little foundation for any of them. One, however, which I frequently heard told with great gravity to the new comers, you shall have. Early one morning a huge ape came down from the ridge of the rock, and cautiously approached the lines. He passed the sentries with great circumspection and at a respectful distance, till, observing that one of them was asleep in his box, the ape seized the musket and scampered off with it in triumph. The man, roused by its being taken out of his hand, pursued him up the steep and craggy face of the rock, but was afraid to give the alarm to the neighbouring sentries, as he was liable to punishment for such gross neglect of his duty. The ape was much encumbered by the heavy musket, to the carrying of which he was obliged to devote one arm, but still endeavoured to make his escape on his three legs, until at length, finding the soldier was gaining upon him, and that to save his prize was hopeless, he suddenly halted, faced round, and turned the muzzle of the piece towards his pursuer. The soldier halted also for a moment, astonished at the sense and daring of the creature, and somewhat alarmed for the result; again he advanced, and at that moment the gun went off. Fortunately the aim was not good, and the soldier consequently escaped from the ape, but not from the punishment, as the report of the musket had betrayed the whole affair."

CHAPTER LXII.

Chivalry — Union of Religion and Chivalry — Preparation for Knighthood — Orders of Knighthood — Knights of St. John — Knights Templars — Temple Church — Keys of the Fortress of Rhodes.

"You expressed great admiration a few days ago, Evelyn, for the heroes of Greece and Rome; but you seemed to overlook those celebrated in modern history. How comes that?"

"I do not know," replied Evelyn; "I believe I have not read as much about them as of my old favourites. Besides, I think that the early history of Europe—and all that time that I believe is called the Middle Ages—seems very dry; and, then, I hate all about the feudal system, and the barons and their tyranny."

"Tyranny is always hateful," said Mrs. Manvers; "but if you had patience to study that portion of history, you would see that the rise of the feudal system was the obvious consequence of the state of Europe in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and that from that state of things—from the lawless oppression and cruelty exercised by the powerful barons of that time—was produced a result which cannot but excite your interest: I mean the spirit of chivalry, which was kindled by a generous desire to relieve those who suffered from injustice."

"Chivalry!" exclaimed Evelyn. "I have always passed over the subject without reading, because I heard Mrs. Stanley and others laugh at chivalry as a ridiculous sort of thing, all at an end long ago."

"Mrs. Stanley probably laughed at the abuse, but not at the use of chivalry; and I may add that, if you were to make yourself a little better acquainted with it, you would find that your time was not thrown away."

"Pray, then, begin and teach me, dear Mrs. Manvers. But, first of all, what is the meaning of chivalry?"

"The word is derived, as I need scarcely say, Evelyn, from *chevalier*, which simply means a man on horseback: from thence comes cavalry, or a body of soldiers on horseback, who in all countries were considered to be of more importance than foot-soldiers: chivalry had also the same derivation, the gallant *chevalier* always appearing on a proud and pampered steed."

"I recollect," said Evelyn, "reading in the '*Roman History*' of a body of noble horsemen of high rank, termed *Equites*."

"Yes, you are right; I was going to mention them. The term chivalry, which originated thus from *chevalier*, had afterwards a more extended meaning when it came to be applied to that noble order of men who, influenced by the sense of justice, bound themselves together by a union of a very peculiar character, the spirit of which, once excited, soon spread throughout Europe. In those times called the Middle Ages, when with overgrown power the chieftains and haughty barons throughout Europe not only oppressed the poor and tyrannised over their less powerful neighbours who were unable to protect themselves, but even brow-beat and controlled their sovereigns, a spirit of resistance was at length roused, which produced the institution of chivalry."

"But, Mrs. Manvers, how did those proud barons acquire such extraordinary power over both kings and people?"

"In order to explain that to you, my dear, we must look back a little on the history of that time. You know that after the death of Charlemagne the vast empire which he had held in control was divided into a number of separate kingdoms, always jealous rivals, and generally at war with each other. The prudent laws he had made being forgotten or neglected, the system of government he had established was dissolved. Each chieftain grasped the largest portion of the crumbling empire that he could claim or conquer, and his power increased not only with the increasing value of property, but still more according to the number of retainers or vassals who were attached to the territories he had seized;

and these persons, according to the old custom of holding lands by military service, were obliged to devote their feudal services to him, instead of preserving their allegiance to their sovereign. Thus was the feudal system gradually produced."

"I see it all now," said Evelyn. "I really never did till now quite understand, or think much about, that feudal system, so no wonder I disliked reading the accounts of their exploits. I suppose, then, each chieftain had a large train of followers to support him against his sovereign, if they disagreed about their possessions?"

"Yes, it was just so. The chieftain who defied the laws was defended and supported by his retainers, who were bound to do so; and, therefore, when a government was thus unhinged and weak, the tribunals of a country were without authority, and, the sovereign being controlled by the tyrannical barons, great confusion and injustice were the consequence, as well as much undue exercise of power."

"Some change, indeed, must have been very necessary: but how difficult to make any when the most unjust were those who had most power," said Evelyn.

"A great change did take place, however," replied Mrs. Manvers. "Endurance cannot go beyond a certain point: it was then that a number of brave and independent men of high rank and higher principles devoted themselves to redress the wrongs of the oppressed. Thus began the military institution of chivalry."

"Now we are coming to the point," said Evelyn. "I could not have imagined that it had so useful an object."

"Those generous nobles," continued Mrs. Manvers, "having themselves suffered from injustice, formed a league for the protection of the defenceless. They gave their hands to one another as a pledge of their determination to succour the helpless, to repress violence, disorder, and crime, to uphold the right, to be the champions of religion and of distressed females, and never to turn their back on the duty to which they had thus bound themselves."

"But when people were so accustomed to that lawless state," said Evelyn, "I wonder how the few knights who had

leagued together were able to effect those great objects : it must have been difficult where the barons had so long exercised such power, and great influence must have been necessary to prevent some from returning to their old-established, unjust, and tyrannical ways."

"It probably would," replied Mrs. Manvers, "but such a spirit had been roused against injustice, that, once felt, it spread rapidly. Besides, you must remember that all who joined the League bound themselves by a solemn oath never to swerve from their rules, which were rendered the more impressive by the severe discipline to which the candidates for knighthood were previously subjected, and by the religious ceremonies that attended their reception."

"That strict discipline must have been difficult to bear, however," said Evelyn. "I am surprised young men were willing to undergo it."

Mrs. Manvers replied, "Parental authority was very powerful then, and seldom resisted. Besides which, to be a knight was so great a distinction that they willingly suffered the necessary discipline, which, though long and tedious, was well adapted to prepare them for future exertions. Those who were destined to arms were placed till seven years of age in the care of the females of the household, in order that from their very cradles their minds should be imbued with the principles of religion, honour, and chivalry."

"The females!" exclaimed Evelyn. "How curious that they should teach the first principles of chivalry, or inspire a love of warlike deeds!"

"In all ages," replied Mrs. Manvers, "it has been the case that the character of the man depends on the principles implanted in his mind during childhood. And though perhaps the females might not have desired to inculcate a love for warlike deeds by itself, yet that feeling, being paramount in those times to all others, was instilled into the youthful heart by their care and precepts, as being sure to lead in time to fame and glory. So ought it to be deeply impressed on every mother's mind that the religion, the honour, the steadiness, and the integrity of her sons will depend on the early principles with which they are imbued."

"People do not seem to consider this when they indulge all the fancies and waywardness of their little boys," said Evelyn.

"No, they selfishly think only of their own gratification in seeing them pleased. But to return to our young cavalier. At seven he was usually sent from home to some distinguished knight, in order to undergo all the trials and exercises which were considered absolutely necessary to prepare him for his future career—a discipline so severe that fathers generally preferred intrusting their son's preparation for knighthood to another, rather than hazard being influenced by their own parental tenderness. Their exercises were very fatiguing, but indispensable to those powers of endurance and those habits of instant exertion on which their success would mainly depend. Another object of this rigid education was to act as a test of the young candidate's courage, so as to prevent the admission of any one who might afterwards disgrace the sword by which he had been knighted, which ceremony terminated his noviciate, and was called giving the *accolade*. It consisted of three strokes of a naked sword on the neck or shoulder, and was always accompanied by a brief but exciting address. He was then a true knight, and was usually sent abroad for three years, in order to gain from other knights practical instruction in chivalry, and to assist at the jousts and tournaments occasionally held at foreign courts in time of peace. Every knight was attended by a faithful squire, who carried his arms, and constantly followed him in all his travels and adventures."

"The institution seems to have been religious as well as military," Evelyn remarked.

"Yes, certainly; for, besides that the protection to religion was one great object, it was really founded on Christian motives; and in order to form a true conception of the spirit of Christian chivalry, we must understand that it was combined with high and solemn ideas, which exalt and sanctify the heart. In all ages of the world man has been capable of heroic and generous actions; but the lofty, pure motives of Christianity gave chivalry a more exalted and perfect character; and that idea was in Shakespeare's mind when he

says the English were renowned 'for Christian spirit and true chivalry.'"

"I suppose, then, that in the early discipline which the knights underwent, religious principle was deeply fixed in their minds?"

"Yes, certainly; and it was the foundation of all their noblest actions, for real chivalry had as its basis a full heart-felt piety—and its chief characteristics were generosity and self-devotion. To gain the favour of Heaven was the first principle of chivalrous education; and to maintain and defend their religion was the office, the pride, and glory of knight-hood; second in force to that religious zeal was a devotion to the female sex, and particularly to her whom each knight selected as the chief object of his affection, which was always of a nature so extravagant as to be almost idolatry. Like all human institutions, chivalry was at last pushed to a vicious extreme, and many errors crept into it; but no sooner was Christianity threatened with destruction in the East than all the chivalry of Europe united as in one band of brethren, under the Cross as their standard, to chastise the Pagans and rescue the Holy City from their dominion, reposing, according to the principle of the institution, with humble hope on the Divine protection."

"Oh yes," said Evelyn, "the education of the knights must have prepared them to fight with fervent zeal in such a cause; but by that time two or three generations of knights must have passed away."

"Yes, certainly, and more," replied Mrs. Manvers. "Sir Walter Scott says chivalry began to dawn towards the end of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh, and blazed forth during the Crusades; but its most brilliant period, he adds, was during the French and English wars."

"You said that a knight always fought on horseback?" said Evelyn.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Manvers. "His service was performed on horseback and in complete armour. He chiefly used the sword and lance, which were the most appropriate weapons; but they had frequently a battle-axe at the saddle-bow, and a dagger to use when at close quarters. Knights

had several privileges of dignity ; they associated with kings and princes, and took precedency in war and council."

" Indeed I see what a mistake it was to say that chivalry was a dry ridiculous thing, united together as the knights were for such noble purposes."

" Their great objects were undoubtedly good," replied Mrs. Manvers, " and we ought to feel admiration for those who first undertook to combat tyranny and vice, and at the same time to promote the civilisation of Europe by enforcing delicacy and respect towards our sex, and protecting and defending them when insulted. This had a singular effect on the manners of the age : while it produced the most generous courtesy and most refined gallantry, and softened the ferocity of all ranks, it equally increased the passion for arms ; and such indeed was the ardour for desperate enterprise, that it became customary to wander about in search of adventures, in consequence of which those valiant men were called knights-errant."

" Then to sum up all, Mrs. Manvers, it might be said that, while chivalry gave protection of every kind to the Christian world, it softened the manners of mankind and diffused the blessings of religion."

" Exactly, Evelyn ; you have emphatically expressed my meaning. It may not have promoted intellectual pursuits—the time for them was not come—but it influenced the heart, and almost every lofty sentiment that actuated the best and bravest men of that period may be referred to that principle which we may call the 'spirit of chivalry,' where, as Spenser says,

' All men were firm allies
In brave pursuit of chivalrous emprise.' "

" How fortunate," said Evelyn, " for distressed damsels in such times if they could obtain the aid of those brave knights !"

" Happily it was not difficult, for, though every knight considered himself devoted to some one fair lady, whom he maintained to be the paragon of beauty and excellence, yet it was his bounden duty to relieve and protect all insulted damsels. The word knight is derived from a Latin one which

means servant, and so each lady's knight was to make battle for her, whether to prove the superiority of her charms or really to defend her cause. Besides real combats for life or death, the spirit of chivalry gave rise to the amusement of imaginary battles and passages of arms called jousts and tournaments, where the conqueror won the smile of the lady whose favour he had sought, and who rewarded his valour with a ribbon or a glove, or some little token of her favour, which he ever afterwards wore; and indeed, whatever was the object of his enterprise, he always bore the emblem of it attached to his helmet."

"Oh! now," said Evelyn, "I see the meaning of those pretty lines in the '*Allegro*,' which I have often read and repeated without having any very clear idea to what they allude, but you have opened my eyes:—

'Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms; while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.'

I should like now to read some description of those grand amusements of old times, tournaments."

"You will find an admirable detail of one in Sir Walter Scott's '*Ivanhoe*,' which I recommend to you as a delightful tale," said Mrs. Manvers.

"How very much I should like to have the pleasure of seeing one! I wish it was the custom now. How charming it would be to see a gallant knight wear my glove, or ready at all times to be my champion!"

"Fortunately we have good laws now, to which you may apply for protection; and therefore, Evelyn, I think we are far better off without them at present: nevertheless we must not, on that account, undervalue the achievements of those ancient and distinguished men who

'Held their honour higher than their ease.'

Their magnanimity—their devoted resistance to arbitrary power—their sacrifice of all private feeling—of self, in short—must be always interesting and inspiring."

"You are so fond of your old knights, that I hope you will not think me very encroaching, dear Mrs. Manvers, if I beg you to explain who were the Knights of St. John and the Knights Templars, for I do not know, though I find frequent allusions to them in books."

"Certainly, my dear. I ought to have mentioned that, from the commencement of the institution, the knights formed themselves into separate fraternities or orders of knighthood; each order had its peculiar objects, laws, and duties, and also its peculiar title, which, in many cases, was the name of their patron-saint, though some took their rise from circumstances which cannot now be always traced."

"But did not some of their titles rise out of their valour in the Crusades?" Evelyn asked.

"They had, in most instances, been established long before those times, and when Christianity was assailed in the East they devoted themselves to its defence. As to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, my dear, long before the first Crusade, a small establishment had been made at Jerusalem by some benevolent persons, in which pilgrims to the Holy Land and Christian travellers might find protection on their arrival. After several efforts of pious people at Jerusalem for the relief of pilgrims and travellers, a few Neapolitan merchants who visited Egypt obtained a piece of ground from the Caliph, who was then master of Palestine, for the purpose of erecting a chapel and an hospital, which were placed under the protection of St. John, from whom they assumed their title; and a house was then built and annexed to the hospital for such pious and charitable persons as chose to dedicate their lives to the service of the pilgrims. On admission, these persons subjected themselves to certain vows and rules, and thus assumed the shape of a religious order. When Godfrey, the great hero of the Crusades, visited the establishment, he found there many of the former Crusaders, who, grateful for the relief and benefit they had received, determined to embrace the order, and dedicate the remainder of their lives to acts of charity. As a reward for all that these good men had done for their fellow-Christians, he endowed the hospital with a large estate. Gifts from others followed, and by degrees

the Poor Brothers of the Hospital of St. John became a very rich community. They assumed a peculiar dress, a black habit with a white cross of eight points, such as we now call a Maltese cross, and, their property continuing to increase, they began to establish similar hospitals, as they called them, in various parts of Europe. Raimond Dupuy, one of the Crusaders, having recovered from his wounds in the hospital at Jerusalem, was elected the Grand-Master, and he soon persuaded his brethren to resume the sword again, binding themselves by a vow to draw it only against the enemies of Christ. I need not enter into their regulations, or the classes into which they were formed ; but such was the origin of that famous order called the Knights-Hospitallers or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. They were afterwards called Knights of Rhodes, because, when expelled from Jerusalem by the Turks, they settled in that island ; and they subsequently took the title of Knights of Malta, that island having been given to them by the Emperor Charles V., when they were driven out of Rhodes, after a protracted and most heroic defence."

" You have interested me very much by this sketch of the Hospitallers, and I am determined to make myself better acquainted with their history : and now, to complete the information which I wanted so much, will you inform me about the celebrated order of Knights-Templars ?" said Evelyn.

" Well then, my dear, I will tell you in a few words that the origin of the order of the Red-cross Knights or Knights-Templars was very different from that of the Hospitallers, yet with a similar half-military, half-religious object. Though the Christian power appeared to be firmly established in Jerusalem under Baldwin II., in the twelfth century, yet the rest of the Holy Land was the scene of perpetual strife in consequence of the mixture of Turk and Christian inhabitants, so that the poor pilgrims and travellers were continually exposed to plunder and violence. Some French knights, therefore, entered into a solemn compact to unite their exertions to free the highways, and to protect the pious *palmers* who visited that holy ground from the enemies of the Cross. But they also bound themselves by oath to obey their Grand-Master in everything, to defend the Christian faith, to cross

the sea in aid of their brethren, to fight against the infidel unceasingly, and never to turn their back to less than four adversaries."

"But why were they called Knights-Templars?" Evelyn asked.

"This body or fraternity," Mrs. Manvers replied, "at first had no fixed dwelling, but were at length assigned a lodging by Baldwin II. in a palace in the vicinity of the Temple at Jerusalem, from whence they derived that name by which they were afterwards known. In the beginning of their career they were styled the *Poor Brethren*, and were not distinguished by any particular dress, their clothes being furnished by the charitable; but after some years it was determined that they should wear a white garment, to which was added a red cross, and that their banner should be also white with a red cross, as a symbol of courage and purity; that banner was named Beauseant, but they had another banner which they carried to battle, and which consisted of black and white stripes, to express kindness to friends and implacability to enemies."

"Their appearance must have been very terrific when in full armour, and bearing that black and white banner; but the white with the red cross was pretty. I am ashamed of having often read of the Red-cross Knights without inquiring what they were."

"But there were many subdivisions of knighthood, and various other orders," said Mrs. Manvers. "The Knights of St. George also bore a red cross on an argent field: but I will finish our Knights-Templars now."

"Pray do, Mrs. Manvers; I wish much to know more about them and of their history."

"Though they began," continued Mrs. Manvers, "in such poverty that they styled themselves, as I said, the Poor Brethren, yet in no long time they became not only the proudest but the richest of all European orders. Their wealth enabled them to found establishments or Preceptories in every country, and their ambition excited them to meddle in the politics of every state, till at last, sinking into all the vices which riches and idleness produce, they became the

objects of the fear and hatred as well as envy of every monarch in whose territories they dwelt, and the order was finally, though I fear unjustly, destroyed in the fourteenth century."

"Was the Temple in London named after them, and the Temple church, which I remember having once seen?" said Evelyn.

"Yes, my dear; a large body of Knights-Templars had very early settled in London in those houses, which were, as you suppose, named from them The Temple, and which, after the suppression of the order, were purchased for members of the law, and have ever since preserved the name—as the Inner Temple, the Middle and Outer Temple, which still exist as proofs of their extensive establishments there. While prosperous they built the Temple church, a beautiful sample of the architecture of the time; and the figures of many of the deceased knights may be still seen there on their tombs."

"Yes, indeed, I recollect seeing them; I wish I had known more about them then, and why they were placed in different attitudes!"

"Knights were placed differently according to the circumstances in which they died," replied Mrs. Manvers. "If killed in battle, the brazen effigy of the knight was placed upon its knees with helmet on and in full armour; if he had died peacefully in his bed, the figure reposes on its back, in armour, and with the feet resting upon two dogs; but those Crusaders whose death had occurred in the Holy Land had their legs crossed on their tombs."

"Were there any other establishments of knights, besides those of the Temple, in England, Mrs. Manvers?"

"Yes, my dear, there were several of both orders, and quite distinct from each other. The Knights of St. John, or Hospitallers, were settled in many parts of England in communities called Commanderies, because the title of the person who presided was Commander. The establishments of the Templars were called Preceptories, because their principal was called Preceptor. There are still the remains of many beautiful buildings which they erected in different parts of England; and in some there are still little communities, remnants of

those established by the Hospitallers, where some men are maintained, the members of which are bound by certain ancient regulations."

"How very satisfactory, and indeed impressive," said Evelyn, "to see those remains of ancient times still existing, and the truth of what we read confirmed by such buildings and monuments! But I think, Mrs. Manvers, that those brave old knights, whose effigies are placed over their tombs, should have their real armour on them."

"It would have a good effect, undoubtedly," Mrs. Manvers replied; "but being so much exposed to damp it would have been difficult to preserve the steel from rust. Your remark brings to my recollection a singular circumstance I lately read; which is, that in the church of St. John at Malta there hangs still a bunch of rusty keys, said to be the very keys of the fortress of St. John at Rhodes, which the order, when overcome, carried away with them from that scene of their glory, the memorable square tower where the last stand of chivalry in the East was made—the last struggle between Christianity and Mohammedanism at the close of the Crusades."

"A memorable spot, indeed, it must be," said Evelyn. "I think I have already caught your enthusiasm. I feel the highest admiration for those illustrious knights with whom you have made me acquainted; and I anticipate great pleasure in reading the history of those times more attentively now that I understand what chivalry was. But I want to know have there ever been any knights in Ireland."

"Yes," Mrs. Manvers said, "there were in several parts of Ireland establishments formed by the two great orders of knighthood that I have mentioned; and there are still here many beautiful ruins of the buildings they erected, some of which I have seen, and, indeed, have views of them. I will only mention a few: Adare in Kerry, Buttevant in Cork, Kells in the county of Kilkenny, and Trim in Meath."

"I hope to see them some time or other; and in the mean while, Mrs. Manvers, I will not forget to beg of you to show me your drawings of them."

"But besides the knights and various orders of which I have been speaking," added Mrs. Manvers, "I must tell you

that Ireland had a chivalry of her own and orders of knight-hood peculiar to this country."

"Oh! why did you not tell me of those first? I hope you will give me some knowledge of them," said Evelyn.

"Certainly I will, if you wish, my dear, but not this day; we have had enough at present."



CHAPTER LXIII.

Chivalry of Ireland — Orders — Knights of the Golden Collar — Torque or Collar of Gold — Oath — Heroes of the Western Isle — Modern Irish Heroes.

THE next evening Mrs. Manvers showed Evelyn several views of ancient buildings in England, once belonging to the two great orders of knights. Some remains of fine buildings in Ireland, which once were Preceptories, were then examined by Evelyn with much greater interest, and particularly a sketch by Mrs. Manvers of that Preceptory at Kells which she had mentioned; and then Evelyn reminded her of her promise to tell her something of the ancient chivalry of Ireland.

“I fear it may not be as interesting as you seem to expect,” said Mrs. Manvers; “for as the early history of its rise and progress is not very distinct now, I can only refer you to our ancient annals. We are assured by some of our historians that the institution of chivalry among the Irish was so ancient that its origin can scarcely be traced. It seems to have been derived from the Celts—the descendants of Gomm the son of Japhet, who peopled all the west of Europe. Letters and arts and civilisation are said to have flourished among the Irish till the Danish invasion first, and afterwards that of the English, destroyed our independence and our records. And we are told that there was in Ireland, long before the Roman invasion of England, an order of men like the *equites* or knights whom Cæsar describes as the second order of inhabitants in Gaul; or, to go back still farther, like the *curetes* or early knights of Greece; and it is remarkable that, according to Mr. O’Halloran, *curathes* is to this day the Irish word for knights. It is a singular circumstance too, that Mr. Wilde found a bronze sword on the plain of Marathon which is exactly the same in form and material as those which are continually

found in different parts of Ireland, and which were used by the ancient Irish. Our ancient knights were a distinguished race of men; they had their peculiar rank and insignia, and were an established order long previous to that league of generous knights of whom we spoke yesterday, and equally brave and honourable."

"And much as I was interested," said Evelyn, "about those heroic Hospitallers, still more shall I like to hear of the gallant deeds of our own immediate ancestors, and of the ancient chivalry of Ireland!"

"There were five orders of equestrian knights in Ireland," continued Mrs. Manvers; "the first was the Knight of the Golden Collar. This order was confined to the blood royal; and no prince who did not belong to it could presume to be a candidate for the Irish monarchy. An instance of this is given in the history of Eochaidh, the powerful Lord of Leinster, who, aspiring to the honour of being chosen monarch of all Ireland, seized upon the royal palace of Tara during the election, in order to strengthen his claim; but the Druids, and councillors of his own court, represented to him how dishonourable it was to take possession of Tara, and still more to presume to be a candidate for the crown, before he had received the golden collar of Knighthood. Sensible of his error, he relinquished his claim and surrendered the palace to Nial, his competitor. This took place in the fourth century. Of the other orders the Knights of Ulster seem foremost in history, for number, prowess, and discipline. They were called Knights of the Red Branch."

"Is it possible, Mrs. Manvers, to trace any vestiges now of any of those orders in Ireland?"

"Yes, my dear, we can—at least of the Red Branch. There are places in Ireland the names of which refer to it. For instance, a hill in Westmeath is named *the Hill of the Branch*. In that hill there is an artificial cave, and the narrow path that leads to its entrance is still marked by upright stones placed on each side, which appears to have been the practice in all similar places of importance. We are told in some of our ancient records, that when the palace of Emaniah, in the county of Armagh, was in its splendour ages ago,

there was adjoining to it the House of the Red Branch, where the renowned champions of the Order lodged their arms and hung their trophies."

"But were those knights heard of anywhere else?" Evelyn inquired.

"Yes, my dear; the knights and companions of the Red Branch are said by historians to have made a very considerable figure in foreign countries, where chivalry was a passport to every Court."

"Why were they distinguished by that title?" Evelyn asked.

"Its origin does not appear to be very accurately known," replied Mrs. Manvers; "but our antiquarian heralds say that it was in allusion to the arms of Ulster—a red hand sinister, *couped* at the wrist. From thence the baronets, created by James I. of England, adopted the bloody hand which distinguishes their order. All James' baronets were called Knights of Ulster, and peculiar insignia had always distinguished the knights of each province. To you, Evelyn, who glory in being an Irishwoman, I need scarcely add that all were remarkable for their bravery; those of Munster were a most intrepid race; and the Knights of Connaught were notorious for their courage all over Europe."

"I do not recollect having seen them mentioned in history," said Evelyn; "although you said that the order was established long before the chivalry you spoke of yesterday. I suppose some of the brave warriors, of whom you related those pretty anecdotes a few days ago, were Irish knights?"

"Probably," said Mrs. Manvers: "Irish chivalry, we are told by the historian O'Halloran, who refers to a multitude of authorities, was instituted some ages before that of the Continent; and though the valour of individual knights often turned the fate of a battle, yet historians may not have thought of distinguishing the knights of Irish orders from others. The rank they held in this country had been early established; they had precedence of all other classes except the *ollambs* or doctors of science. And we are gravely told by some of our antiquarian enthusiasts that, about the year A.M. 2996, it was decreed that they should have silver shields and targets,

should be allowed to wear five colours in their garments, and should also have the privilege of fighting in chariots—formerly reserved to princes only. Soon afterwards it was decreed that the knights should wear a collar of gold round the neck; and it is quite true that the Roman historians do mention that ornament as being worn by the Gaulish warriors.”

“What a pity,” said Evelyn, “that our brave knights ever laid aside that collar! it would have been such a distinction—so remarkable! why could not they continue to wear it?”

“They did wear it,” returned Mrs. Manvers, “for a long time after the Anglo-Norman invasion; but the Normans, being anxious to abolish ancient customs, in order to subdue the people more completely, ridiculed and gave it an epithet of contempt, and it was laid aside. The utmost care was bestowed on the military education of our knights—academies were founded for them in Ireland at the national expense; the candidate was entered at a very early age, a slender lance put into his hand, and along with his martial education he was deeply instructed in letters, philosophy, and poetry till fifteen, when he took his first vows. Then came the more strenuous exercise of casting a javelin at a mark, and the use of the heavy two-edged sword; in time they were taught to ride and to fight on horseback; and at eighteen they took their last vows.”

“But you have said nothing of their sentiments or ideas of honour; had they such principles as *your* knights-errant?”

“I ought, indeed, to have stated that, according to their historians, they had the most elevated sentiments, the highest principles of honour, heroism, and respect for women. By their vows they were obliged to protect the injured and oppressed; never to reveal their name to any uncourteous knight; and not to go out of the road for any menace, nor to decline combat with any true knight. To swear by their knighthood was their most sacred oath, reminding them at once of all their vows: as, for instance, ‘I affirm on the arms of my knighthood.’ Their common saying was, ‘*Glory is preferable to life*’; and it was their ruling principle. As a proof of the antiquity of Irish chivalry, it is recorded that when Richard II. came to Ireland he proposed to knight the four provincial

kings; but they declined the compliment, each king having been knighted by his own father at seven years old."

"I should like to find some good accounts of our Irish knights having distinguished themselves on the Continent?"

"Our own histories," replied Mrs. Manvers, "tell us that the knights of Ireland in very early times frequently traversed the Continent, and gained the glory and renown they sought. Their exploits are often mentioned, at least, in Irish verse; and so celebrated were they in Europe that they were called the Heroes of the Western Isle!"

"Ah! Mrs. Manvers, it is indeed very pleasant to think of what our great ancestors were, but most painful to feel that they have degenerated!" said Evelyn.

"Though many untoward circumstances combined to uncivilise this country, and then retard the re-improvement of our countrymen, you cannot say, Evelyn, that they are individually less brave and capable than they ever were. Just recollect the numerous officers and men of every rank who so nobly distinguished themselves during the late war. Read the history of that time, and you must perceive how poor Ireland then distinguished itself in the army and navy; and that, although we no longer have Knights of the Red Branch, we have many distinguished heroes."

"It was indeed thoughtless of me," said Evelyn; "I ought to have remembered the illustrious name of Wellington!"

CHAPTER LXIV.

Mrs. Manvers' Adventures — Proceeds to Canada — Falls of Niagara — The Backwoods — Lake Ontario — Return to Ireland — Visit to Mr. Stepney — Captain Manvers settles in Canada — Birds — Fossil Fish — Emily, a sister of Mrs. Manvers, arrives — Birth of a Boy — Mr. Tallon — The Deed — The Fire — Emily marries.

MRS. MANVERS' recent allusion to the heroes of modern times had reminded Evelyn that the sketch she had given of her life had only come down to her husband's regiment being ordered to Canada. One afternoon, therefore, when they had come in from an early walk, she begged for the continuation of her adventures; and, Mrs. Manvers having consented, Evelyn placed a small table at the window near her, in order, while she listened, to sketch one of the beautiful oak-trees in the lawn.

"I think I told you that our regiment was ordered to Upper Canada, to the great regret of my husband, who thus lost all chance of what he considered active service; and you may imagine how much that feeling increased our dread of all the inconveniences of residing in a new country, where everything was said to be unfinished and uncomfortable.

"However, we are truly the creatures of habit, and in the course of two years we were not only reconciled to our situation, but Mr. Manvers absolutely became so much attached to the country, that, when the regiment was recalled to England, he told me that he had determined to quit the army as soon as he possibly could with propriety, and return to Canada as a settler. I shuddered at the idea; but he laughed at my horror of the backwoods; and as it was my duty, as a wife, to submit, I made no further remonstrance, though hoping, I confess, that the chapter of accident might lead to the adoption of some less disagreeable plan.

"That hope soon failed me, however; for, before the

regiment left Canada, Mr. Manvers heard of a property in a remote district north of Lake Ontario, and determined to secure it, if desirable, while yet in the country; he immediately obtained leave of absence for a few weeks in order to see it; and I resolved to accompany him.

"From our quarters we easily made our way to Niagara. There, indeed, I was so astonished, so charmed, with that magnificent arch of water—that scene so often, but never adequately, described—that for some time I forgot my dissatisfaction, while my fancy dwelt with delight on residing within reach of such a noble sight. Having spent two days enjoying this astonishing scene, we set out in an open boat to cross the lake in a north-east direction—my thoughts completely intent on preserving the picture in my imagination of that scene which we had lately left, and which alone was to reconcile me to my banishment; Mr. Manvers looking forward to the 'new home' of which he was in search, and anticipating the pleasure of the adventures and hardships of a settler's life. The morning was bright and sunny, and each of us was so occupied that we felt no fears about the weather or anxiety about our passage.

"We had reached nearly the middle of the lake when our thoughts were recalled to the present by the uncommon stillness of the atmosphere and by a kind of solemn gloom which appeared to surround us. The boatmen seemed alarmed; we did not understand them well, but perceived that they expected a storm. The dark impervious haze meanwhile was rapidly increasing, and no one seemed to know what to do. The silence, already awful, became still more so, when, in less than a quarter of an hour, we found ourselves in almost total darkness. The rowers scarcely moving their oars, yet the plash of them in the water at long intervals was the only sound that broke the dreadful stillness.

"I cannot express the horror that I felt when I remembered that we were in the middle of a lake unknown to us, in such a little, and apparently unsafe boat, with only two rowers; but I controlled myself, and in perfect silence put up prayers to the Almighty Ruler of all events for delivery from the coming but unknown danger. My dear Frederick

told me afterwards that the self-reproach he felt for having led me into a danger from which escape seemed impossible filled his whole mind—the idea that we should be drowned together appearing too selfish even as a consolation.”

Mrs. Manvers paused to recover her voice, which had faltered at the recollection of her own and her husband’s feelings on that singular occasion. After a few moments she continued :—

“ No one spoke for some time. Oh ! how long those minutes appeared ! I had closed my eyes, resolved to resign myself to the will of Heaven, and try to withdraw my thoughts from life ; but on hearing something like an exclamation from my husband, I opened them. Never can I forget my joyful surprise and the spring of grateful feeling at seeing the returning light ! The only object in view was the boundless expanse of water, which became every moment more and more distinct, and which, like the sea in Heber’s beautiful hymn, as the sun resumed his splendour, ‘ shone glorious as a silver shield.’ At length Evelyn we perceived there had been a total eclipse of the sun ! ”

“ Dear Mrs. Manvers, your description has been delightfully alarming ; but how glad you must have been to have seen such an awful and uncommon sight ! ”

“ Yes, I was very glad indeed ; and though being in the middle of that great lake, and ignorant of what was going to happen to us, had certainly given a great shock to my feelings, yet it enhanced the interest when we came to think over the scene.”

“ Did it not excite for the moment a sort of foreboding in your mind about the new mode of life you were soon to adopt ? ”

“ No, no. If I had had any superstitious thoughts of that sort, its effect would rather have been to comfort me with the belief that, like the rapid and brilliant return of the sunbeams, my gloomy apprehensions would speedily vanish. We only laughed at our mutual ignorance of what every one in possession of an almanac might have known ; and as everything in America appeared to us gigantic, or wonderful, or strange, so even an eclipse seemed to have something in it peculiar.

" We arrived in safety at our destined port ; but when, on landing, we asked for something to eat, we found there was nothing to be had, not even bread or milk, and we had to travel twenty miles in a very rough waggon before we could procure any food. Much of the road consisted of stems of trees laid across it and placed close to each other ; sometimes, where it passed through the outskirts of the forest, the roadsides were brilliant with scarlet lobelias, which grew there in damp ground as abundantly as the loose strife * does in this country. In some places the cypripedium of various colours gave additional ornament to the woods and plains. Our way sometimes led through tangled forests which it was difficult to penetrate, as there was at times no sort of road to be found. At length we arrived at a gentleman's house, where we were very hospitably received, supplied with food, and given a mattress on the floor, on which we rested comfortably after our wearisome journey.

" The next morning we found that there was no road whatever by which a waggon could pass between that house and the place to which we were going, and we had to walk ten miles to it, by wild paths through tedious woods. Our host sent a guide with us ; but these difficulties of reaching it will give you some idea of the loneliness of the place : Frederick, poor fellow ! liked it for its stillness, remoteness, and the solemn gloom of the surrounding woods. But you may suppose it was with no little vexation that I saw him complete the bargain ; however, I had still a hope that, when once we had arrived in England, whither we were obliged to go before he could leave the army or attempt to settle, his former tastes would revive, and that he would relinquish the scheme of living in such a dreary spot.

" We returned by York Town, as Toronto was then named, to our quarters immediately after the agreement was made, and in a short time left Canada with the regiment. After a favourable voyage we reached Falmouth, from whence Frederick hastened to London to put things in train for the sale of his commission ; and having arranged everything for completing the transaction, we came to Ireland

* *Lysimachia*.

to take leave of our friends. I had lost some of them during my absence ; but I was tenderly received by those who remained, and it was a painful pleasure to revisit the scenes of early youth, so truly expressed by the unfortunate Griffin :—

‘ There’s music in each wind that blows
Within our native valley breathing ;
There’s beauty in each flower that grows
Around our native woodland wreathing.

‘ The memory of the brightest joys,
In childhood’s happy morn that found us,
Is dearer than the richest toys
The present vainly sheds around us.’

“ But, alas ! the time passed too quickly ; my husband soon reminded me that we were to visit his uncle, and that we had much to prepare for our removal to Canada, promising, however, that I should come again to take leave of my relations. Thus the happiness of being with them was clouded by the anticipation of a parting, which I felt must be for ever, from some whom I most loved and venerated. It was a trying time !”

“ Indeed,” said Evelyn, laying down her pencil, “ I do feel for you. I wonder how he could tear you from them !”

“ And Frederick felt for me—yes, deeply ; but the wish to emigrate is a sort of insanity that, when once it has seized hold of the mind, becomes unconquerable. I can only compare it to the strong desire that people sometimes have to throw themselves from a height. The struggle was evidently painful to him, and I was obliged to request my friends not to argue with him any further on the subject. As for myself, whatever misery I felt, there was no struggle : it was undoubtedly my duty to go with my husband, and to submit with calmness—with cheerfulness, if possible.

“ I accompanied Frederick to the seat of his uncle, Mr. Stepney, who had been always partial to him, and had given him his commission. He received me with kindness, treating me as a daughter, and fully entering into my feelings respecting this perverse speculation of my husband’s, as he called it ; but even his remonstrance had no effect.

"This was a great disappointment, for I had formed some hope from his influence. Our enjoyment of the visit was spoiled by the company of another nephew of Mr. Stepney's, who made himself disagreeable by his jealousy of Frederick, though professing both affection and friendship for him.

"Mr. Stepney had had twin sisters, each of whom had a son, and it was generally thought that one or other nephew would be heir to this uncle, as he had no children. One of those sisters was mother to Frederick. The other had married rather beneath her; and though her son, George Tallon, had had the same advantages of education as Frederick, I must say, without partiality, that my husband was in every respect infinitely superior to him in every manly and gentlemanlike accomplishment, as well as in all the more sterling qualities of both head and heart.

"After a visit of some weeks to Mr. Stepney we returned to the scenes of my childhood, and paid our last and painful visit to my friends—I have never been at that dear old mansion since. My grief I cannot describe, for it was the more afflicting from the efforts I made to suppress it. I endeavoured to prevent my relations from expressing theirs; for as my husband had determined on the step, however much I disliked it, I wished that his feelings towards them should not be soured, and I was desirous to do my duty exemplarily.

"Frederick soon conquered every official obstacle with respect to his retiring from the army, took leave of his old companions, paid off all his debts, completed every necessary arrangement for his new enterprise, and in a short time we again sailed for the New World, but each of us with very different emotions indeed from those with which we had a few years before embarked for the same country."

"Yes," said Evelyn, "not only different emotions, but what a different life, too, you were to lead there! However, though so unlike what you had ever known, your active mind, I dare say, found much to interest you."

"The small details of my life in the wilds would occupy so much of our time that I will not now enter into any tedious particulars—we suffered the same inconveniences that all

settlers must endure, and found that some of the luxuries we had brought with us were so much out of place in the log-house which had been hastily built for us, that for some years we never unpacked them. The situation of our place was so remote that months elapsed before we could procure any furniture, so we transformed the old boxes and packing-cases into substitutes for tables and even into chairs, for which I contrived cushions myself. Fortunately we had taken with us stores of many useful articles, and, having been taught in my youth all kinds of plain work, as well as the art of cutting out, I had little difficulty in making up the furniture that we absolutely wanted, such as curtains, and a variety of other little comforts preparatory to the long and dreary winter we expected. Frederick often expressed his satisfaction at all I contrived to accomplish, and I began to be happy when I saw that he was pleased with my activity, and that he really enjoyed his home and his new life. Many things came under our observation then which we had had no opportunity of seeing while at quarters in Canada, such as the manner of clearing the woods, the burning of the logs and the brush-wood, and the many other peculiarities of that wild country. The tedious snow came at length; but the wonderfully rapid vegetation that followed, and the beautiful succession of wild flowers after the departure of winter, were delightful! The hepatica, earliest of the spring flowers, and the duckfoot, with its pure white blossoms, which fall when the slightest breeze shakes them, and the root of which yields the red juice that the Indians employ in dyeing their basket-work; these and the dog-tooth violets, red, white, and yellow, quickly followed each other."

"The dog-tooth violet!" exclaimed Evelyn. "Is that pretty plant wild in Canada? Here I have often heard that it is difficult to preserve in gardens."

"Yes, that dog-tooth violet, so much prized here, and which seldom grows very freely even in our flower-beds, was in profusion in the wild forests. But it has been found by people to whom I suggested the plan that it succeeds best if planted under trees. You will find that hint worth trying," said Mrs. Manvers, who then continued:—

" We lived so completely in *the bush*, as the uncleared woods and new settlements are called, that we found money was scarcely more useful than the leaves on the trees ; for we actually could not with it procure in our neighbourhood many articles which we had been accustomed to consider as absolute necessities. Among these was sugar. Fortunately, we had several maple-trees on our land ; and, under the direction of a neighbour, we made a stock of maple sugar successfully ; but it is both a laborious and anxious occupation, as success much depends on attention as well as skill. During the first year we were often in want of many comforts and conveniences ; but it was astonishing how easily we became accustomed, on the one hand, to forego some indulgences, and, on the other, to go through a degree of labour to which we should formerly have considered ourselves quite unequal. The difficulties and fatigues of our toilsome life were sweetened, however, by mutual affection, and our minds were constantly enlivened and refreshed by the interest which our love of natural history gave to all our occupations. Books and conversation always beguiled our lonely evenings ; every day brought with it fresh objects worthy of attention ; and as the snow gradually departed, the renewed life of plants and animals supplied us with a constant succession of materials for observation. For instance, in April we noted that the snakes awakened from their winter sleep ; early in summer they might be seen basking in the sun on the edge of our large quarry, at other times swimming swiftly on the water it contained. The water showed their brilliant colours to great advantage as they swiftly darted through it on any alarm ; and afterwards we were not a little astonished at seeing the broods of young snakes run down their mother's throat for protection. The birds, too, though there was not a great variety, and but few songsters, excited our interest, as they were so different from those of this country. They began to chirp in April, and, though inharmonious, it was cheering to us, as they were our only companions in the solitude of the woods.

" There was one little bird, indeed, which had a very sweet song, though with little variety of note ; it was a great fa-

vourite; but after wasting many a half-hour in watching it, I never could satisfactorily discover its habits, it was so reserved and shy. It was the more prized by us, because for some years after we had settled there we saw no birds except eagles, jays, owls, crows, and woodpeckers; not having any shrubs or small trees near the house. But when our shrubbery grew up a little, and afforded shelter for small birds, they increased rapidly. We had a nice little yellow fellow like a canary; small sparrows that had a sweet note, something like our common hedge-sparrow here; humming-birds in summer; and beautiful orange and yellow orioles. Swallows in great abundance came in spring, and of course went away in autumn: but they reminded us of home, when puddling up their little lumps of mud, and industriously sticking them on the wall under the eaves of the roof, in order to form their snug nests. We had plenty of blackbirds also, very pretty and glossy; but instead of the delightful song to which we had been accustomed in Ireland, they only chattered noisily.

"A few wild plants, too, reminded us of home; in some parts of the country we had the pleasure of seeing some which are common here, or at least which strongly resembled them.

"It was also a great amusement to Frederick and me to search for petrifications in a limestone-quarry that had been opened on our land. We found there in one stratum fossil fish that were almost perfect; and we often picked up beautiful specimens, both in the rock or crumbled away, of shells and bones of bygone animals, and even small branches of trees and bits of wood, now thoroughly stone, but in which the grain of each species could be plainly recognised."

"How curious," said Evelyn, "that fish should be found so far inland, and in a quarry of all places!"

"It appears curious," replied Mrs. Manvers; "yet it is only a confirmation of the various changes which have taken place in the globe since the time of its creation, and each period of which is evidently distinguished by its peculiar characteristics. But though much alive to the subject of those wonderful geologic revolutions, we were too constantly

and laboriously employed to give much of our attention to any pursuits of that kind; and Frederick used sometimes to conclude our trifling researches by saying—

“ ‘When the time comes, these wonders will be made manifest to all men. Do you not see how abundantly yon brilliant fire-fly decorates the woods and gives light in their gloomy shade? and so will knowledge of every kind replace our dark ignorance when it is the will of the Almighty.’ ”

“ A new turn, however, was given to our thoughts. When we had been three years in Canada I found that I was about to become a mother. Formerly I should have thought a child an inexpressible blessing; but now, in the wilds of Canada, having but few neighbours, and no physician near me, I could not but feel alarm. It seemed in my lonely state to be a grievous calamity; I could not but dread the hour of trial, not only for myself and my poor babe, but for Frederick, whose feelings, naturally violent, would now be racked with anxiety beyond all control.

“ But I was wrong in feeling that dread, for, besides the reliance on Providence which experience should have given me, I ought to have considered that in Canada, when there is illness or distress in any family, all the neighbours join in rendering assistance in every possible way—sitting up at night, attending the sick, contributing, each as they are able, assistance of every kind, necessities, comforts, or little luxuries that any one of them may happen to possess, and in the hour of affliction giving sympathy and tenderness.

“ I suppose this depression of my spirits was unintentionally betrayed in my letters, as, some weeks before my expected confinement, I heard from my unmarried sister that she was actually on her way to Canada, being anxious to take care of me on such a trying occasion. I knew what an aversion she had always had to the idea of Canada, and I felt the more deeply the sacrifice she was making for my sake.

“ Emily soon followed her letter. Words cannot describe the thrill of delight I felt when I embraced her, nor the swell of my heart at her energetic kindness in coming to me. She had travelled with a family who were emigrating, and most of her luggage was to come along with theirs. But she had

in her portmanteau some of everything she thought I could want—nice baby-linen, and various little marks of her kindness, as well as of my other friends at home.

“My little boy was born late in the autumn. I was very ill; my husband, my sister, and my nurse were indefatigable in their care of me. Their prayers were heard, and I recovered; and we spent the most cheerful winter I had long known. My husband wrote to his uncle to announce the birth of our son, and begged permission to name him Edward Stepney. In a few months came a letter from Mr. Stepney in reply, congratulating him and accepting the compliment; and at the end he added—‘I rejoice more than ever about the packet I gave you. It will secure you from any lawsuit hereafter; but I charge you to let no one know what it is, or where it is kept, and never, on any pretence whatever, put it into any other hands than your own, unless you are dying.’”

“You knew, I suppose,” said Evelyn, “what the mysterious packet contained?”

“Oh, no! Mr. Manvers had as great a regard for a promise about a small as about a large thing; yet certainly this passage did excite my curiosity extremely. In the joyousness of his heart Frederick had given me the letter to read, forgetting that last paragraph; and I, like a silly child, thinking he ought to have no secret from me, tried to induce him to reveal it, assuring him that, as we were one, his uncle could never have intended to conceal it from me.”

“He was much tempted to tell me, but he resisted. ‘You will yet acknowledge the advantage of my not imparting this one secret to you,’ said he; ‘you may think it a trifle, but I feel that it is better you should be ignorant of it now. If I should ever appear seriously ill, it will be my duty to tell you; and till that time comes, I beseech you, do not ask me to break a solemn promise to my uncle.’ I was disappointed, but I urged him no further.

“In the course of the summer we were surprised by a visit from Frederick’s cousin, George Tallon. He appeared most affectionate and friendly, and congratulated me so warmly on the birth of my son, and spoke to me always with so much confidential openness, that I began to think I had been unjust

in not liking him when we met at Mr. Stepney's. He seemed to take a great interest in our concerns, inquired about our farm and future prospects, and sometimes hinted that it would be unwise of Frederick to be induced by anything that might occur to return to Ireland. In that opinion I could not agree; but considering it useless to argue a subject which involved such a variety of feelings, I never replied, and I suppose he imagined that I was convinced by what he said.

"One day, when no one else was present, he asked me if Mr. Stepney had given a promise to Frederick that he should be his heir. I simply replied in the negative.—'I do not know how to believe that, for the attorney showed me the rough draft of a deed to that effect,' said he, looking very hard at me while he spoke.—'Certainly not,' I replied; 'I should have known if it was the case; but, after all, what does it signify?'—'It signifies very much to me,' returned he, 'to know what I am to expect from my uncle.'—'Then ask uncle Stepney himself when you go home,' said I.—'It would be rather an awkward question to put to my uncle,' he replied; 'but I wish I could see that deed just for five minutes—just to see the nature of it; for, indeed, I have reasons for thinking that it is not worth a pinch of snuff, and if you will permit me to see it I will tell you the value of it.'—'I really know nothing of any deed,' said I; 'but if you think the affair of any consequence to Frederick, why do you not mention it to him?'—'Oh, as to that,' said he, 'your husband—do not be angry with me—is rather suspicious of me; it is easy to guess why; but you are more generous and confiding; you can feel for the painful state I am in with such doubtful prospects. I beseech you to help me if you can, but at all events say nothing to my cousin about it, or you will cause, perhaps, a quarrel.'

"As he said these words my sister entered the room; he instantly changed the conversation. He was afraid of her, for he considered her much more clever and firm than I was, and he had more than once perceived that she doubted the truth of many things he said.

"At night, when Manvers and I were alone together, though half afraid of the threatened quarrel, I hinted what his cousin had been saying.

“ ‘ Well,’ said he, ‘ you, happily, can say with truth that you know nothing about the matter. Let that satisfy him ; he says he will leave us in two days, and I wish he may depart in peace : the less said on the subject the better.’ ”

“ The next morning had been fixed on for a ramble through the woods—where the fear of wolves and bears prevented our ever going without Mr. Manvers. Some distant neighbours had appointed to meet us in the forest and walk home with us, and we expected to have a cheerful, sociable afternoon. My sister and Frederick had walked on ; Mr. Tallon and I were to follow directly, but he delayed for some minutes, and, when ready to set out, he stopped me, and again tried to persuade me to show him the deed. I solemnly assured him I knew nothing about it ; upon which, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he said that he thought he ought to pack up, as he was to take boat early in the morning, that he had seen enough of the tiresome woods already, and by making his preparations and writing his letters now he could spend the evening with our party. So, not sorry to be relieved from his company, I left him and walked on with the nurse and baby, whom I had detained to accompany us. I found my sister and Frederick at a good distance sitting on the stem of one of the great trees which had been felled in clearing our land ; they were waiting for us, but, when Frederick saw that his cousin was not with me, he looked uneasy, and wished to return. I dissuaded him, however, from doing so, as we had engaged to meet our friends, and we walked on. They were both silent, till at length my sister suddenly stopped, and, looking earnestly at Frederick, declared that the more she reflected on certain circumstances which occurred to her, the more convinced she was that it would be wise to return, and urged it so strongly and decidedly, that Frederick declared he would go back.

“ ‘ Come, then, at once,’ said she.

“ As we walked home Emily told me that she had an insurmountable fear of Mr. Tallon.

“ ‘ I am sure,’ said she, ‘ there is something wrong about him.’ ”

“ As we approached the house everything seemed as calm and cheerful as when we had left it. We saw Mr. Tallon at

a distance walking slowly among the large trees, and our *only* maid besides the nurse was just returning from the river-bank, where she had been *beetling* the linen; when suddenly, as she put her hand on the latch of the door, she screamed out 'Fire! fire!' It was too true; for we then perceived the smoke curling over the roof, and in half a minute after the flames bursting from the back of the house.

"No help was at hand; all my husband could do was to bring up from the river a bucket full of water in each hand, which the maid received from him, and then he ran with two empty ones that were ready at the door. My sister and I were labouring to put whatever was most valuable in safety, while he, poor fellow! was making such exertions; but though each bucketful stayed the flames a little, the fire was gaining upon us, and all would have been destroyed, had not some American choppers, whom we had employed in the winter, been passing most providentially at that moment. They hastened to our assistance just as Frederick was scarcely capable of doing more, and with their aid the fire was extinguished. They then took off a part of the shingled roof, and by cutting away some of the half-burned beams and logs the rest of the house was saved. We suffered, however, a very severe loss. Much of our little stores were consumed or injured; and, worse than all, the closet where we kept whatever papers were most valuable, and what little money we had in the house, was completely destroyed—all had perished. In the mean time the friends whom we were to have met in the forest had come on, and actively lent their aid; but one of them, after attentively examining the ruins, decidedly pronounced that the house must have been set on fire intentionally. The maid declared that no stranger had been about the place while she was at the river, as from thence she could see the house. Frederick shook his head, but said nothing.

"At last Mr. Tallon returned from his walk. For a moment he looked embarrassed, but then said, 'How fortunate that you returned earlier from your walk than you intended!' 'Yes,' said I, 'it was well we did, or our all would have been lost. For a length of time we had no help. But where were you? I thought you had remained at home to pack up?'

'Yes,' said he, 'and when I had finished I set out to follow you, but it appears that I took a wrong path.' I felt provoked at his indifference, but there was no time for any further conversation, as he and our friends were busily assisting my husband in mending the roof for the night, helping us as much as they could before they were obliged to return home.

"Early next morning Mr. Tallon departed. After he was gone, when we were settling the house, we found that all the boxes and presses which had escaped the flames were in disorder, evidently having been rummaged and disturbed in a manner which the fire could not have effected. A little rose-wood writing-box that Frederick had given me, and which had been in my own room, was gone, and there was not time for it to have been consumed; but its lock was not easily opened, and I suppose that, imagining the object of his anxiety was deposited there, he carried it off. Fortunately it contained nothing of consequence. My sister reminded me, when I expressed my astonishment at the whole affair, how often she had said his countenance was bad and false. She and Frederick agreed that we must be still on our guard, for the person who could act as he had done might return and do something still worse. 'I have baffled him as yet,' said Frederick: 'he shall never find what he wants.' 'It is true, then,' said I, 'that you have that paper about which he was so inquisitive?' 'Ask me no questions about it, my dear: it is well for you that you knew nothing of the matter,' said Mr. Manvers. I was vexed at my own weakness in asking the question, and remained silent; but poor Frederick, thinking I was mortified at his answer, drew me towards him in the tenderest manner, saying, as he laid his hand on my shoulder, 'You have already seen that your ignorance saved you from being more harassed by Tallon's inquiries. How could you have concealed the particulars from him had you known them—you who are truth itself? As far as you can avoid it, never place yourself in a situation where truth and expediency may be opposed to each other.' We then agreed that every one should be on the watch, that we might not be surprised by a still more unwelcome visit.

"Our few neighbours and friends showed great kindness in assisting in the repair of the house, but it was some time before

we were comfortable: our peaceful life was changed. Suspicion of treachery kept us in an uneasy state of mind, and affected my spirits; but in about two months we had the satisfaction of learning, by letters from Ireland, that Mr. Tallon had arrived at his uncle's. Then, Evelyn, came a new cause of anxious interest to me. My sister had won the affection of an amiable and truly excellent clergyman who had been lately appointed to our district; and though her continuing in the same country with us would have been the greatest blessing, we could not encourage him. Both Frederick and I felt that it was a situation unsuited to her taste and expectations. Highly accomplished and educated as Emily was, I felt my pride hurt at the idea of her being buried in the forests of Upper Canada. She, acknowledging the truth of all I said, took a long time to determine; and Mr. Hope generously waited, never urging her to sacrifice her prospects to his happiness, but showing, in every possible way, the strength of his attachment to her. At length a favourable opportunity occurred for her return to Ireland with a respectable family, and I thought she would accompany them; but when it came to the point she resolved to relinquish her own country for Mr. Hope, being satisfied, after a long and painful conflict of her feelings, that he was worthy of the sacrifice. Shortly afterwards the Bishop came to us in one of his visitation tours. Emily was married, and she still assures me that she has never for one moment repented that important step. I felt at the time as if it was my fault that she was to be thus an outcast in the remote woods and wilds of the western world, and could not help lamenting that one so particularly suited to the most polished society should have entered on a life apparently so ill adapted to her. However, having once made her decision, she walked steadily and cheerfully in the path of duty—of happiness, I may say; for whatever she judged right to do, she did in such a manner that duty and happiness were one. She has now a large family, all of whom are sensible and amiable, and show how much can be done by education and example even in that distant region.

“For several months after the fire took place, we underwent various hardships from want of money and from scarcity

of provisions, and sometimes from the difficulty of procuring a servant. Our little store of corn had been damaged by the fire, and for months we had no bread—little, indeed, besides peas and salted meat, of which we had a small stock that escaped injury; and as we had to purchase all other food at an increased price from dealers who charged an exorbitant profit, we were forced to be satisfied with scanty portions. In short, till the arrival of our half-year's income, we could not pay even for necessities; but many kind friends contributed to our comfort by useful presents, and the Indians frequently brought fish from the river near us, for which a very small reward was sufficient. My poor husband's spirits sank very much at seeing me undergo these privations; but as the baby did not suffer, I was quite contented, and when at last our usual remittance came we again felt tolerably at ease. But Frederick was still harassed by dread of his treacherous cousin, and by his letters, which were artful and troublesome, implying that his uncle was displeased at Frederick's refusing to comply with a proposal which Tallon said he wrote to him by his uncle's desire—namely, to give up the deed for a large sum of money. It was plain from all this that Frederick possessed a deed, but neither the object of it, or the place where it was deposited, had yet transpired.

“Months passed away, and nothing very new occurred. Our chief pleasure was in our dear little boy, who, notwithstanding unfavourable food, and the absence of many comforts here considered essential to children, thrived apace, and was as healthy and fine a boy as any country could show. He was very intelligent and bright-minded. As his years increased, it was a real delight to his father to instruct him, and guide his observation and his reasoning powers. Indeed I never saw a character improve like my poor Frederick's. His self-control, his calmness, even his principles, all seemed to become more steady; and his daily endeavours to increase his own knowledge, in order to qualify himself for the instruction of his son, were not only remarkable, but quite touching.”

Mrs. Manvers suddenly paused. Many painful feelings had been awakened by the circumstances she had been relating, and she retired to yield to them in privacy. When she re-

turned, after some time, Evelyn ingeniously led the conversation to other subjects, carefully avoiding any allusion to the narration in which she had been so much interested, and determined to avoid the subject till Mrs. Manvers should recur to it herself.

CHAPTER LXV.

Story continued — Captain Manvers ill — The Mystery explained — Sorrow — Mrs. Manvers sails — Ship strikes on a Rock — Arrives in Ireland — Goes to Mr. Stepney — Her Son sent to School — Illness of Mr. Stepney, and Death.

SOME time passed without any allusion to Mrs. Manvers' narrative, when, one evening, she said,—

"I feel your kindness, my dear Evelyn, in avoiding all mention of my little history; but do not imagine me so weak as to have any reluctance to finish it. If you wish to hear what yet remains untold, I am ready."

"Indeed I do," exclaimed Evelyn; "I feel great interest in it; but I had resolved not to be again so selfish as to inflict on you the pain of recalling the past."

"I understood your motive," replied Mrs. Manvers, "and thank you; but I will not disappoint you. I must not yield too much to unavailing regret; besides, I can say, with overflowing gratitude, that my son is still granted to me, and that my sister, though far from me, is happy in the midst of her family. I am still blessed with the affection of a few kind friends; and I flatter myself that perhaps your warm heart, Evelyn, may place you, young as you are, among those few. I am so romantic as to think friendship may exist between young and old."

"Dear Mrs. Manvers, you are kind indeed! Oh! how much more kind than I have deserved! But if the time ever come that I may really deserve your friendship, I shall owe it to your example and advice."

"Well, I will begin at once," said Mrs. Manvers. "When our dear little thriving boy Stepney was about eight years of age, and just when we were beginning to be comfortable, after our long struggles through distress and difficulty, and when we thought independence was within our grasp, just then

my poor husband's health began to fail. A cough, apparently trifling at first, gradually increased, notwithstanding all the prescriptions of our physician, who lived at some distance, and all the care with which my sister and myself administered them and daily watched the fatal progress of the disease. It was probably brought on by too much hard work at the harvest, which was uncommonly fine that summer, and then by sitting in the verandah, or strolling out to enjoy the treacherous, though refreshing, coolness of the evenings. Whatever was the cause, it was, alas! unconquerable; the lungs rapidly became diseased, his strength failed, and, after some months of agonising suspense, it was but too evident that there was no longer a hope of his recovery. I wished that he should know his danger, but it was so painful to me to put it into words, that each time I attempted to awaken his mind to the dreadful truth I was so agitated that I could not proceed. It happened unfortunately that my brother-in-law was at that time visiting a distant part of his district, so that I could not avail myself of his assistance in the awful task, and yet, as my husband's bodily weakness daily increased, I felt more and more unhappy at my inability to do what I knew was my duty. At length one morning, after I had finished some Scripture reading which he and I always had with our dear child, he sent him out to play; and after a silence of some minutes he pressed my hand, and, fixing his eyes on me intently, he said in a strong voice, which seemed as if he had been trying to collect strength for the effort, 'I have for some time felt a conviction that I could not recover—I know that you, my love, have felt the same; I perceived it in your countenance. I have seen your struggle and your failure in attempting to make my danger known to me; and I felt so much for you that I could not command myself till now to open my mind. I am aware of my real state, and fully resigned to that Divine will which orders all in wisdom, and I trust that I am prepared to appear in his presence with that hope which rests on earnest faith in Christ. But I wish now, while my mind is still clear, and time yet allowed me, to finish my worldly cares by giving you some directions.' He paused—I could hardly speak, but urged him not to exhaust him-

self. 'Do not interrupt me, dearest,' said he; then taking a small packet from his bosom, and with a faint smile, he continued: 'Now, Lucy, I am going to confide to you the mystery which once excited your curiosity so much, and about which you have so completely ceased to inquire, that I might think you had forgotten it, but that I attribute your silence to that high principle which always actuates you.' He stopped for a few moments; and, sad as those moments were, the words he had just uttered were like a soothing balm to my heart. 'This packet,' he continued, 'contains *the deed* of which my cousin was so jealous, and which, if I had not kept it about my person, he would have found. By this deed my uncle makes over his chief property to me; and also in remainder to you and any children we might have. He insisted on my promise not to divulge this transaction to any one, not even to you, unless I was dying; he believed no woman could keep a secret—if he had known you better, dearest, he would have trusted *you*. Believe me, it was painful to withhold my confidence from you, the faithful and beloved companion and friend of my heart; but having promised, and knowing as I did the artful disposition of Tallon, I felt that I was right to save you from the persecution you would have suffered.'

"He then added, in a few words, that his uncle considered this deed more secure than a will; and he desired me, when he was gone—after I had made such arrangements as I thought best in regard to our Canadian property—to return home and place myself and our dear boy under his uncle's protection. 'Let him feel,' said he, 'that you and little Stepney will be a comfort to him while he lives, as well as his heirs after his death. I have written to prepare him for my death, and for your return to Ireland. If he wish you to reside with him, pray do; it will be a kindness due to such an attached parent as he has been to me. Now you know all, my mind is much lighter. Be careful of the deed; you know not when some other attempt may be made to obtain it either by force or fraud; and that is the last thing I shall say to you, my love, on the business of this world.'

"To my great comfort and relief my sister and Mr. Hope

at length arrived. Their conversation with my beloved Frederick, which was full of cheering and pious views, their reading to him, and their prayers, were all most consolatory to us both, and soothed the bitterness of our approaching separation. I must pass over the details," continued Mrs. Manvers, with a faltering voice, "of the sad and painful weeks that followed.

"When I was able to turn my thoughts to business I settled my affairs as well as I could, with the assistance of my brother-in-law, and in compliance with the injunction I had received I sailed for Ireland. For my own part, I should have preferred remaining in the place where we had been together to the last; but my son was now my only object, and I resolved to make every effort for his sake. On first setting out, several trifling obstacles occurred; and before we finally quitted the *St. Lawrence* the ship was in great danger. We were roused in the middle of the night by the shock of its striking on a sunken rock; the captain, too confident in his own experience, had neglected to take a pilot, and too late learned his ignorance. In the darkness of night we had to quit the vessel at a moment's warning. In the scramble, and bustle, and danger, I could not expect people to be ready to help me when every one was in such a state of alarm for themselves; and though my maid and I made every possible effort to collect our trunks and to have them rapidly put into the boats, and then to keep all together, I lost one of them, besides other small things which I valued particularly. Those efforts, however, were of use to me, for in one of those moments of despair, which often follow extreme danger, I confess that I wished that we had gone down when we struck, so much was my heart filled with the wish to rejoin my lost Frederick; but when I looked at my fine boy, beautiful, amiable, and promising in every way, I felt that it was a tie to this world that I could not forego. It was then that my heart expanded with gratitude for our escape, and that my thanksgivings burst forth towards the Almighty protector of all who trust in Him.

"I was obliged to take my passage in another ship, though she was uncomfortable in every way, and not quite safe, as I

afterwards learned ; but it pleased Heaven to bring us through all difficulties and losses to Ireland.

“ On arriving I lost no time in going to Mr. Stepney, who received me most affectionately, wept over my little boy, whose father he had so dearly loved, and, in every way showing the deepest interest for us, took a melancholy pleasure in hearing every little circumstance of my poor Frederick's illness and last moments. He frequently talked to young Stepney, questioned him on many subjects, and was so pleased with his intelligence, that he proposed sending him to school in the following spring. In compliance with his wish, and as Frederick had desired it, I consented to reside with my uncle for the present, though certainly a house, or even a lodging, of my own, would in some respects have been preferable.

“ The winter passed away in tranquillity, till the time came for sending my boy to school, and my uncle generously left its selection to me. I took the child there myself; and in parting from him I felt as if my sole remaining object in this world was gone. I took the opportunity, however, with the concurrence of Mr. Stepney, of visiting my elder sister, whom I had not seen for many years. She was all affection, all heart; and as to my brother-in-law—oh, Evelyn! I wish you could have known him. He had such a powerful mind, and with it so much benevolence—especially to young people: he took so much delight in opening their minds, and in guiding their perceptions, that it was impossible not to be improved while with him; and in former times he had been always so kind to me that I owed him a deep debt of gratitude and love. The visit to these friends was consolatory and reviving; my mind was awakened to much that was worthy of thought, and the indolence that had been creeping over it was overcome.

“ When I returned to The Grove I found Mr. Stepney far from well. He appeared to pine after his adopted child, though it had been his own wish to send him to school, being desirous to secure his education while he was alive, and to take the whole expense of it on himself. I forgot to mention that very soon after my return from Canada he had inquired if I had the deed; on my answering in the affirma-

tive, he gave me a strong injunction to keep it safe, and told me what steps to take in case of his death ; and now feeling himself unwell, he repeated them. His illness, however, was temporary, and he was soon able to return to his usual habits. He liked solitude, for he had been accustomed to live much alone ; and though it pleased him to think I was living in the house, and gratified him to find me ready to sit or walk with him when he was sociably inclined, he spent the mornings in going about his grounds chiefly by himself. I had therefore much leisure, which I employed in the instruction of some poor children, whose mother had been foster-sister to my husband. She was dead, and they were quite neglected by their father. The eldest was a boy of eleven or twelve, uncommonly quick and intelligent ; he had been at a neighbouring school, but his father took him from it on pretence of wanting him at home. However, he made no objection to his coming to me every morning with his sisters, and I could not doubt that little Andy was glad to receive some education. I saw it in his grateful countenance, and in the delight he showed at his sisters' improvement. Mr. Stepney sometimes smiled at all the trouble I took with these children ; wondered I was not glad to rest from the labour of teaching now that my own boy had gone to school ; and sometimes added a terrific warning that no one was to be trusted, and those very children might turn against me yet. But I could not bear to live without endeavouring to do some good, and it was a comfort to me to think I was of use to any one even remotely connected with my poor Frederick ; so I continued to teach them every morning, till at last poor uncle Stepney fell into such a delicate state of health, attended by some alarming symptoms, that I devoted myself entirely to him, and scarcely ever left him.

“ I had been there a year and a half ; during that time Mr. Tallon, being quartered in England, had paid him only one short visit. His manner to me was high and disagreeable ; but I was indifferent about it, as I felt myself completely under the protection of Mr. Stepney, whose kindness to me was invariable.

“ When the physician informed me that there was no hope

of recovery, my uncle, who had been quite aware that his decline was rapidly advancing, desired me to write to inform Mr. Tallon, and other near connexions, of his danger, and also to his attorney, as he wished to make his will, and settle all his worldly affairs.

“When the attorney arrived, my uncle had become so much more weak, that he was unequal to the exertion of dictating a will, and said to me in the presence of the attorney that it was of no consequence whether he made a will or not: ‘For,’ said he, ‘you have a deed by which I gave the chief part of my property to your husband and to you and your son in succession: it is better than a will. I wished only to leave some small legacies; but I have mentioned most of them to you at different times, and am not able now to repeat them.’ ‘Dear uncle,’ said I, ‘do not forget Mr. Tallon.’ ‘No, no, my dear, I have not forgotten him. I lately sent him a thousand pounds, which, along with what I gave him before, fulfils all my intentions towards him.’

“He was much exhausted after this conversation, and, poor kind uncle! he died on the following morning.

“Several friends and neighbours, and two of my own cousins, came to attend the funeral; and when some of those who were intimate in the family inquired was there not a will, I repeated all that my uncle had said on the subject that last day in the presence of the attorney. Mr. Tallon wrote that he could not obtain leave of absence to attend the funeral. Everything was done properly, and without bustle. My cousins remained a few days with me, and advised me to take my deed to town at once, and learn from a law friend if there were any step to be taken; but the attorney requested me to wait till Mr. Tallon’s arrival, that he might be present, and know all that was done, for he would, of course, be disappointed as to his own expectations. I consented, and considered myself mistress of the place.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Warning — Little Andy's Fidelity — Mrs. Manvers sets out — Accident — Little Box — Deed Safe — Assailants at Stepney Grove — Kindness of Sir Connor O'Brien — Her Son enters the Army — Andy provided for.

" I HEARD nothing of Mr. Tallon for several days, but continued to make preparations for my intended journey to town. One afternoon, tired of writing lists of plate and other property, I went to stroll in a shady serpentine walk leading from the house to the garden. It was about four o'clock of a very hot summer's day. While I sauntered slowly, musing on the vicissitudes of my life, and on the prospects then opening to me, I heard once or twice a rustling among the leaves near me, and, thinking it caused by birds, I paid no attention to it; but suddenly, while standing under the shade of a large horse-chestnut, I was startled by the fall of something like a large pebble close to my feet; I observed a bit of paper attached to it, and, after some little hesitation, I picked it up, and unfolded the paper, which contained these words:—' Good and kind lady, you were always good to me, so I will not stand by and see you ill-used. This is to warn you—the big house will be attacked to-night—all your papers taken from you, and may be your life too. Send for Andy now, and give him secret orders to get a chay for you, to come to the stile at the grove by the road-side at six o'clock; and you, Madam, pray do come to it then, but not a word, on your peril, to any one.'

" I was almost stunned at reading this, and, looking round, I perceived Andy gliding off among the trees. My first impulse was to doubt—then a determination to abide by my fate, leaving all to Providence. But second thoughts convinced me that the poor boy could not mean to deceive, and must have had reason for what he had written. I knew that there were some bad and lawless people in the neighbourhood, and,

as it occurred to me that they might be employed by Tallon to rob me of the deed which was now so valuable, I felt that alone and unprotected I could not preserve it.

"While thinking on what was best to be done, I tried to loiter in the walk, but every sound, even my own footsteps, startled me, and I soon returned to the house. With a beating heart, trying to appear calm, I desired one of the servants to send for Andy, to take a note to a lady who lived near. He was ready within call, and quickly attended my summons. I gave him a note to the lady; and then, taking every precaution that no one should hear me, I desired him to procure a post-chaise, and bring it to the place he had named. I thanked him for his fidelity, but he put a finger on his lips, and ran off instantly, holding my note to the lady in his hand. I gave him also a letter to a friend in Dublin to put in the post, and soon afterwards sat down to dinner, without much appetite as you may suppose. As soon as it was over, I collected, as well as I could in my hurry, several little valuable memorials of times past, put all my money and a few trinkets that I possessed into my pocket, and, as the deed was too large for that, I deposited it in a small work-box, fastened by a spring lock, and with a single handle on the top by which I could hold it. Having put a change of linen into a large black silk work-bag, I secured it by a string under my gown, and lapped my large cloak about me, with a close bonnet and veil; and when prepared to leave my new home, I told some of the circumstances to my own faithful maid, who had lived with me for many years; charged her to see to everything till my return—to keep up her courage, as it was only my papers or myself they wanted to destroy—expressing my full dependence on her attachment and fidelity.

"I then went out, as if to take my usual evening walk, holding my precious little box under my cloak, and walking slowly lest I should attract observation, fearing every shadow, and my knees trembling at every step, as I advanced towards the appointed spot. I saw the carriage stop at the moment that I reached the stile; the door was instantly opened, and little Andy (who was concealed inside) slid quietly down the steps. He was running past me, when I stopped and offered him a little

money, which I held ready for the purpose, but he rejected it, saying, in a low voice, 'I want no money, but only to save you that are good to me; don't tell any one I did it. Oh! Ma'am, make no delay.' He refused the money a second time, and darted away.

"I drove rapidly to the town of C——, which Andy told me was the best to take me out of all danger of meeting my enemies, but I arrived too late for the night mail, by which I had determined to travel to Dublin. This was a great disappointment, but another coach was to go at six in the morning, and I tried for a place in that. I was again unfortunate, not an inside place to be had; I could not bear to wait all day at the inn, and it might have been hazardous; to post alone might be equally so. I therefore secured an outside place on the morning coach, and buying from the hostess a large coarse woollen cloak, which she was so good-natured as to let me have, I set out next morning at six.

"It was cold and disagreeable, but I was relieved from some of my anxiety by feeling that I was really on my way to Dublin, my little casket secure in my hand, and with every reason to hope that I should arrive in safety.

"We had travelled several miles when the coach was stopped, where there were cross roads, by two gentlemen, so anxious for seats, that, although there was scarcely room, a general push was made in order to admit them. Having determined neither to move nor speak, I kept my ground, and in my dread of being seen I never once looked towards the new passengers.

"Some time afterwards, going rapidly down a hill, one of the horses fell, and some of the passengers were thrown off; fortunately I was saved by clinging fast to the back seat, where I had placed myself. It was necessary, however, for all to alight in order to arrange the luggage on the top, which had been disturbed by the sudden shock. In descending, my foot slipped off the small iron step, and, in falling, I lost my hold of the precious work-box. Several gentlemen instantly sprang to my assistance; I was raised up by one, my box picked up by another, but the lock, I perceived, had given way in the shock, and one corner of the parchment was sticking out.

"It was a moment of almost despair; but with a courage

and strength at which I have since often wondered, I instantly snatched my box from the person who held it.

"Hastily pushing in the parchment, I concealed my work-box again under my cloak; and when we resumed our seats I had at least the satisfaction of feeling that it was safe from the stranger, whose air, as he stooped to pick it up, seemed to be that of a person I knew, and afterwards I discovered him to be no other than Mr. Tallon himself!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Evelyn, "what horror you must have felt at the very idea of the box having been actually in his hand, and, indeed, at his being so near you."

"Yes, I felt ready to faint between the sense of my present escape and the fear of what might yet befall me while thus travelling along with him, for I was convinced that he had recognised me. Happily he was not next me on the coach, and alighted immediately on entering the city. The friend to whom I had written met me at the coach-office, and took me home to his own family, where everything kind and hospitable was done to restore me, sinking as I was from fatigue and agitation."

"I am so rejoiced at your escape, and at the safety of the deed!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"Yes, the deed was safe, Evelyn, and I thought I was secure of its validity; but I had been only a day in Dublin when the attorney came to inform me that a will had been found by Mr. Tallon, which he had brought to show to my friend and to me. Its purport was in exact opposition to that of my deed—leaving all to Mr. Tallon, and stating that, as it was his last will, all previous wills and deeds became null and void. This was an unexpected blow. I could not deny that the signature appeared to be that of uncle Stepney; but I did not, nor can I ever, believe that the will was voluntarily made and executed by him. He was incapable of deceit. Of course I exclaimed at its falsity, but could not prove it; for though I produced my deed, and again repeated in presence of the attorney all that Mr. Stepney had so recently said, he coolly maintained that he had heard different words. Unfortunately no third person had been present at the time. Still, however, I depended on the deed, which I knew was of more force than any

subsequent will. It was examined, and it would have stood, but it was found that there had been an error in drawing it—I do not know what. My lawyers saw that it was of no value against a will which appeared duly executed. They investigated the whole affair, but nothing could be proved; and in the most disinterested manner, they advised me not to embark in a lawsuit. I spoke of justice, of equity, and of Mr. Stepney's own words; but there had been no witness of them but him who perverted their meaning. I could make no further effort.

“It happened curiously that, after one of the meetings between my law friends and Mr. Tallon and his lawyers, one of the former heard Mr. Tallon say to the attorney, as they went down stairs, ‘So, after all, we need not have taken the trouble of getting up the row that night, as the deed was not worth a pinch of snuff. I wish we had known that.’

“I was still unwilling to relinquish the claims of my son, but had, alas! no means of proving the intentions of my uncle. I was advised by some to agree to a compromise, and to accept a part of the property from Mr. Tallon; but I would not consent to such a step—to go shares with him in a fortune which I knew he had acquired by fraud; and I declared that my dear boy should sooner beg his bread, if he could not earn an independence for himself; for nothing could persuade me, who knew uncle Stepney's attachment to Frederick, to myself, and to our son, that he could have made such a disposition of his property; and yet I could not deny that the pretended will had his real signature, though how to account for it baffled all my ingenuity. Reflecting on the matter afterwards, I have thought it possible, my poor uncle having had several leases to sign a short time before his death, that perhaps that artful attorney who had drawn them out substituted this will for one of them, and therefore the two witnesses who swore that they saw him sign and acknowledge it to be his hand and seal, and who of course knew nothing about its contents, might not have been mistaken. But however that may be, there ended my hopes; and the deed so long preserved—so long considered as insuring a splendid provision for my dear boy—was perfectly useless! I was, I confess, truly disheartened for a time, the more so because I was the victim of such base and monstrous

falsehood ; but I looked up with humble confidence to Him who is father to the fatherless, trusting that He would support us through all our difficulties.

“As soon as the decision was finally made relative to my claims, I wrote to my maid, whom I had left at the Grove, to pack up my trunks and come with them to town. Upon my inquiring of her what had happened the night that I made my escape, she informed me that several ruffians did break into the house, and could not be made to believe that I was not there. They searched all my drawers, pulled out all my papers, but took nothing, and at last went away. They had a leader whose face was blackened, but some of the old servants whispered a surmise that it was Tallon himself. They were rude to my maid, pushing her roughly out of their way. They threatened to tie or blindfold or beat her because she still tried to prevent my things from being dragged about, and openly offered her a large sum of money if she would find for them a certain parchment which they said I had no right to have. I conclude that, after that noble exploit, he hurried off, and contrived to reach the cross-roads in time for the coach. And now I have little more to add, except that your good grandfather, Evelyn, became my benefactor. He took on himself the education of my little Stepney, all the expenses of which he liberally defrayed. He wished him to choose some civil profession, but the poor fellow had such a thirst for military glory that your indulgent grandfather gave him a commission. He used sometimes to spend his holidays with your grandpapa, but I suppose you cannot remember him.”

“Oh, yes, I do a little. He was very kind and good-natured to me—I remember that at least ; but I recollect him only as Stepney. I never knew till now that he was your son. But where were you all that time?”

“After my son entered college I went again to Canada to see my sister Emily, and to arrange the sale of the little property I had left there. On my return home I settled in a cottage in Cornwall, and had promised to pay a visit to poor Sir Connor the very summer that we lost him. My elder sister and family had gone abroad, and I felt almost alone in the world. My son’s regiment was sent to India, and he has

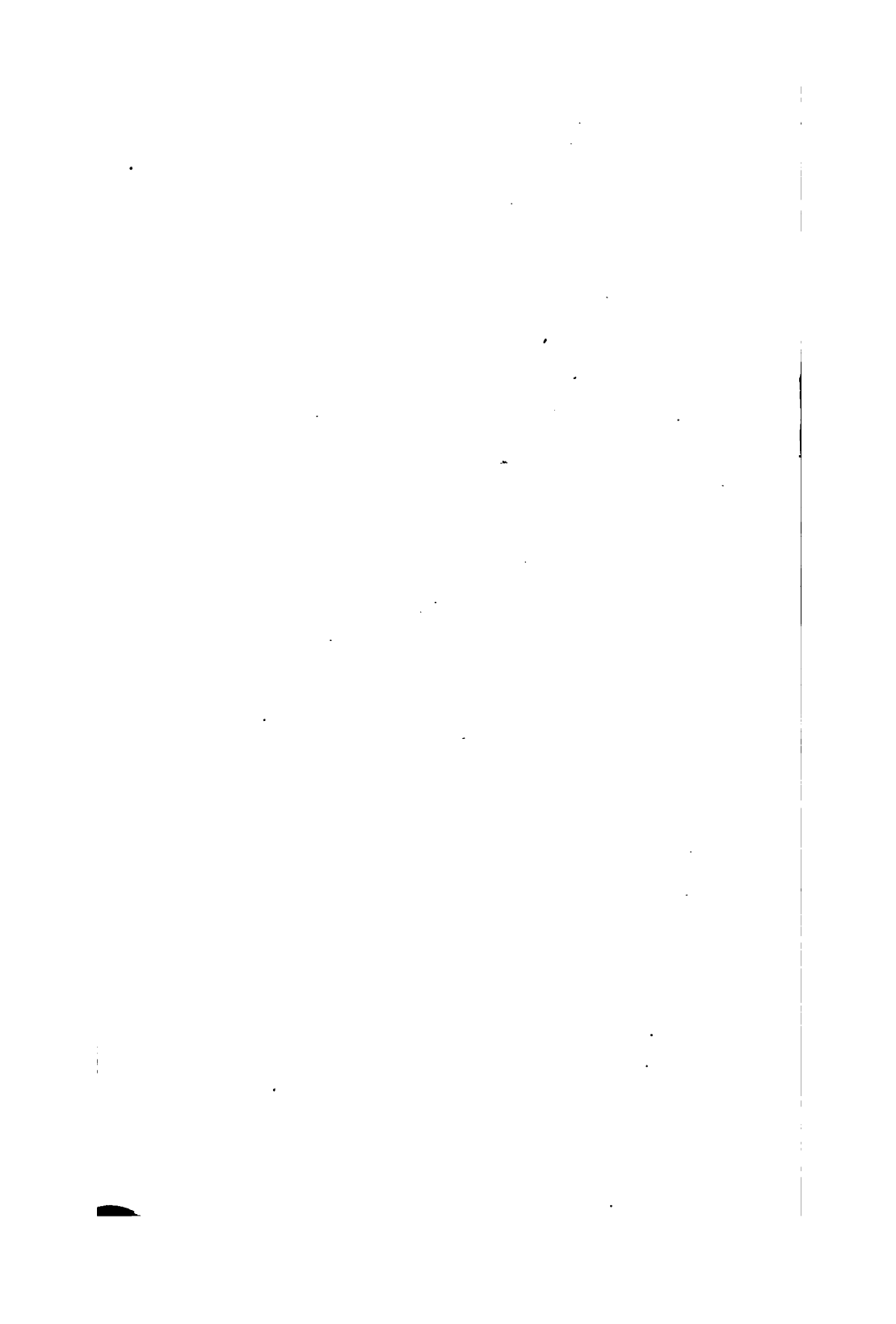
been there a few years, but I trust it will be soon ordered home. He has distinguished himself whenever opportunity offered, and has already got on well as to promotion. I frequently hear from him, and his letters are always affectionate and satisfactory."

"Did you ever see poor Andy again?" said Evelyn.

"Yes, and I had it in my power to serve him. That good friend at whose house I was so kindly received in Dublin was so much pleased at the account of his attachment and gratitude to me, that he procured for him a very respectable situation as a clerk. He has discharged his duty well, and has done credit to my recommendation."

END OF VOL. I.







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